

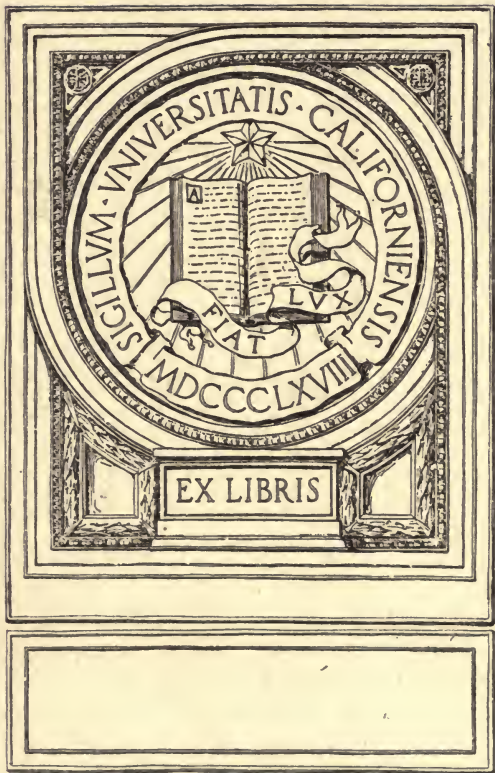
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STARVED ROCK

OSMAN







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STARVED ROCK.

STARVED ROCK

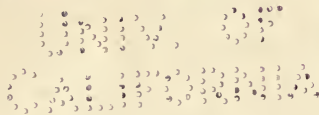
A Chapter of Colonial History

BY

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SECOND EDITION: REVISED AND ENLARGED



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TO THE
ADMINISTRATOR

PREFACE.

I have not attempted to rewrite the history of the Illinois country, but only to show what was the part played by "Starved Rock," or Fort St. Louis of the Illinois, in the great struggle of France and England for the possession of North America. This story forms an unwritten chapter of American colonial history, which has been overshadowed, so to say, by the comparatively insignificant incident (historically speaking) which gave to the Rock on which Fort St. Louis was placed its expressive modern name.

For the first time, too, in an accessible form, a connected chronicle has been made, as a part of the history of this site, of the first Christian mission in the Mississippi Valley, called the "Immaculate Conception," a record of Christian missionary endeavor and martyrdom that added lustre to the always dramatic story of the early Roman Catholic missions among the Indians of North America.

The authorities consulted are, I think, all named in the notes to the text, for the benefit of those students who care to pursue the subject to greater length than was here deemed advisable.



I have no dearer aim than to
make leisurely pilgrimages
through Caledonia; to sit on the
fields of her battles; to wander
on the romantic banks of her
rivers; and to muse on the
stately towers or venerable
ruins, once the honored abodes
of her heroes.

—*Robert Burns.*



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ERRATA.

Page 80: In fourth line of note under the engraving, after the words, "La Salle," add the words, "meriting attention."

Page 121: In first line of note, spell "St. Come" "St. Cosme."

Page 125: In second line, spell "Calliers" "Callières."

Note.—The Rock has been purchased by and is now in the possession of the State of Illinois.



INTRODUCTION.

Gaspar, how pleasantly thy pictured scenes
Beguile the lonely hour! I sit and gaze
With lingering eye, till dreaming Fancy makes
The lovely landscape live.

—*Southey.*

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

“I have stood upon Starved Rock and gazed for hours upon the beautiful landscape spread out before me. The undulating plains, rich in their verdure; the rounded hills beyond, clad in their forest livery; the gentle stream, pursuing its noiseless way to the Mississippi and the Gulf, all in harmonious association, make up a picture over which the eye delights to linger; and when to these are added recollections of the heroic adventurers who first occupied it; that here the banner of France so many years floated freely in the winds; that here was civilization while all around was barbaric darkness,—the most intense and varied emotions cannot fail to be awakened.”*

Starved Rock† is one of the most remarkable of natural curiosities of the West. Once a minute is-

* BREESE: “History of Illinois.”

† The Rock is situated in La Salle County, Illinois, near the village of Utica.

land in the vast flood of waters that in geologic ages filled the present Illinois River valley—isolated now from the bluff that here bounds the Illinois Valley on the south, the Rock stands apart, like a monemental shaft, or mediæval watch-tower, a solitary sandstone cliff, whose walls, carved into



THE TOP OF STARVED ROCK—LOOKING NORTH.*

form by the waters of other ages, rise one hundred and twenty feet above the level of the river of the present day. Circular in form, the summit of the Rock contains about half an acre of land which is still partially covered with the growth of evergreens and oaks, such as the first white man found crowding its meager area, the native forest trees

* Showing approximately one-third of the area of the Rock.

of prehistoric Illinois; while its sides are draped with vines, ferns and wild flowers and the remains of the cedars and pines of a former time.

The summit is accessible only by the southern escarpment, where the flood-eddies of Illinois River heaped the sand against the base of the



LOOKING EAST FROM TOP OF STARVED ROCK.

Rock. Nature's hint has been accepted by man, both savage and civilized, who has cut rude steps in the sloping side of the Rock and thus made a practicable path for its ascent. This pathway has been used for the purpose probably since the first man reached the top and saw its strategic strength. For the Rock is a nature-made citadel, as impregnable to assault as Gibraltar; and, like many an-

other feudal refuge, it has more than once repelled direct attack and been captured only after starvation had slain its defenders.

From the summit the valley of the Illinois lies spread out before the eye like a picture—an incomparable view, limited only by the reach of human vision. To the east the eye follows the thread of the river as it flows past cultivated farms and under the shadow of verdure-clad hills. In the near distance rises Buffalo Rock, in form and substance like Starved Rock itself, but larger, its plateau comprising many acres; beyond which may be seen the ascending smoke of Ottawa's factories.

Turning to the west, the eye lingers over the broader but more sluggish stream that steals away between green and fertile fields, or hides behind low clumps of trees, until the silvery trail is lost in the distance, where, just above the horizon, extending from bluff to bluff, over the wider expanse of river, hangs the great bridge of the Illinois Central Railroad, which on a clear day may be seen, as a gigantic spider's cable, suspended above the river,

Like a triumphal arch
Erected o'er its march
To the sea;

or like a screen, behind which sit the twin cities of La Salle and Peru.

From the northern segment of the Rock one may

look across the valley and beyond the village of Utica to the bluff that marks its narrow width; while directly at one's feet is the river. On the farther shore, and a mile westward, where now is a cultivated field, once stood the ancient La Vantum of the French, the Kaskaskia of the missionaries; otherwise the chief village of the tribes that once occupied the "Illinois country" as their hunting grounds, who made this plain their favorite and for many years their permanent summer home.

The last native woodlands of the Illinois Valley in La Salle county are on the hillside of the southern bank of the river, which form the background of Starved Rock, looking toward the south.

Such are the physical characteristics of Starved Rock, which in themselves have made the Rock famous as a landmark in Illinois for centuries; but the historical recollections centering here are even more noteworthy and in recent years have brought the Rock into prominence as the most interesting spot west of the Alleghenies, associated with our colonial era.



Jacques marquette

[The painting from which the picture was made was discovered by chance at Montreal, a few years ago, and has strong claims to probability.—THWAITES: "Father Marquette."]

THE PATHFINDERS.

In vice untaught, but skill'd where glory led
To arduous enterprise.

—*Euripides.*

SKETCHES OF JOLLIET AND MARQUETTE.

The first white men who are known to have seen the eminence now known as Starved Rock and the great Indian town of the Illinois, LaVantum, nearby, are Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette, returning in the year 1673 from a voyage of discovery of the Mississippi. Not that they were the first Europeans who saw the Mississippi. More than a century before either was born the Spaniard Alvarez de Piñeda (1519) had entered the river and another, De Soto (1541), had explored it as far as the Arkansas and was buried beneath its muddy waters. But with De Soto the exploring and colonizing energy of Spain was exhausted; and as the Mississippi Valley had never appealed to the Spaniard as a possession, amid the stress of wars at home that succeeded the age of Spanish exploration, even the memory of what Spanish navigators and explorers had seen of the northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico in the sixteenth century was lost, and the Mississippi lapsed into the unknown,

to be found again when in the movement of the world's great drama its cue was called.

France on succeeding Spain as a world-power devoted her colonizing energies more especially to North America. Jacques Cartier as early as 1535 explored the St. Lawrence as far as the site of Montreal, thus blazing the trail for Champlain who in 1608 founded Quebec and laid the cornerstone of New France, thus "building the hive whence poured the swarm" of heroic Recollet and Jesuit missionaries, and the *voyageurs* and *cour-eurs de bois* who scattered themselves, within the next thirty-five years, over the interior and pushed their examination of the continent to the farthest limits of the Great Lakes. The missionaries found the trails, and as the missions were pushed farther and farther westward the annual *Relations** of the fathers seldom failed to make mention of a "great water" still farther to the west, of which their Indian flocks gave them information.

In this way the French came within "hailing distance" of the Mississippi as early as 1635, when

* From 1632 to 1673 there was published annually at Paris a little volume, called a "Relation," which contained an account of the far-spread work of this Jesuit mission to the Indians for the twelve months previous. It was largely made up from reports and letters sent in by the missionaries to their superiors at Quebec. To-day these "Relations" are of very great value to historians, for from them is obtainable what is often the only information we have of affairs in New France for certain periods.—THWAITES: "Father Marquette."

Nicolet reached Green Bay* and the Fox River of Wisconsin and there heard of the "great water"



JEAN TALON, INTENDANT.

which he supposed was the Pacific. Still more exact information of the river was brought to Que-

*Originally, Grande Baye, perverted by the English to "Green Bay."

bec in 1660 by two young fur traders named Pierre Esprit Radisson and his brother-in-law, Medard Chouart, known as Sieur des Groseillers, two of the most daring of all the early hunter-trader-explorers of New France. As early as 1659 they had penetrated the interior, sixty days' journey southwestward from Lake Superior, and there saw a grand and beautiful river comparable in its majestic proportions only to the St. Lawrence itself. The *Relation* of 1660, which recorded this discovery in a rather inconsequential way, failed to mention the names of these adventurous traders, the first white men who saw the Mississippi after De Soto; and so it happened that both they and their discovery were forgotten by the chroniclers until only a few years ago (1886) when Radisson's narrative, written some years later than 1660, was found in London in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, of which he was the inspiring genius.*

Such travelers' tales as these by Radisson and by Allouez and Dablon in the *Relation* of 1669-70, where the Mississippi is described, although it had not been seen by the writer, and those of still others, doubtless, whose names have not been recorded by

* AGNES LAUT: "Pathfinders of the West." Here the story is set out in detail, with an account of Radisson's earlier adventures. See also BRYCE "Remarkable Story of the Hudson's Bay Company."


any annalist, filled the minds of the French authorities in Canada with the mystery of the Mississippi and aroused interest in the secret of its origin and outlet; but no steps were taken to solve the problem until Jean Talon, intendant, the one man of keenest political vision then in Canada, caught in these stories a gleam of French dominion in the West, and made haste to realize his dream of empire by taking possession of the great western country as "essential to the successful prosecution of the conquest of North America from the colonists of England and the soldiers of Spain."

By his order, therefore, Sieur de St. Lusson, on June 4, 1671, at the Sault de Ste. Marie, ceremoniously proclaimed the royal authority over all the great Northwest, Father Claude Allouez, of whom more will be heard later, making the harangue to the assembled Indians. This done, Talon set about finding the Mississippi and exploring the country through which it might flow.

Having obtained from France the necessary authority, he selected as his agent for this service one Louis Jolliet, a young man who had witnessed de St. Lusson's ceremony at the Sault, and who was already noted in Canada as an explorer and continental pathfinder.

Jolliet, whose name, with that of Marquette, will forever stand near the head of the list of explorers

of the Mississippi Valley, was one of the most daring and successful of the explorers of New France. The second son of Jean Jolliet, whose marriage to



Marie d'Abancour, on October 9, 1639, was attended by Jean Nicolet, then just returned from the Wisconsin country,

Louis was born at Quebec in 1645 and was baptised on September 21 of the same year, as is attested by the records of the church of Notre Dame de Quebec, still extant. His father, who had come to America from Sezanne in France, was a poor wagonmaker; but the son, early deciding to become a priest, was educated for that office at the Jesuit College of Quebec, receiving the tonsure and the minor offices at the age of seventeen. He then became an assistant at the College. As a student he was skilled in pious learning and acquired some reputation as a polemic in philosophy; and it is said Talon first met the young man at a public discussion in philosophy in which both took part. Soon after this, however, Jolliet suddenly abandoned his career in the church to follow the calling of his elder brother, Adrien, a fur trader. He first made a Trip to France, and then plunged into the woods, where he quickly obtained a reputation for courage and for successful enterprise and exploration.

In 1668 Talon sent Jolliet to Lake Superior to find the copper mines which rumor had already located in that region, as well as to find a better route to that lake than the trail *via* the Ottawa River, then in common use. This exploration was made in 1669. Jolliet did not find copper; but on his return voyage a service rendered to certain Iroquois Indians, captives among the tribes of the lakes, put him in the way of finding a new route "around the lakes," until then unknown to the French, *via* Lakes Ste. Claire and Erie; so that Jolliet stands in history as the discoverer and first white navigator of both these lakes, as well as of the Ste. Claire River, although the name Ste. Claire was given to the lake and river by La Salle some years later. Jolliet coasted the northern shore of Lake Erie; and although on this first journey over the route, he crossed from Erie to Ontario by way of Grand River, he then learned of the easier passage *via* Niagara, with its short portage around the great cataract.

During the years spent in the region of the Great Lakes, Jolliet became familiar with the numerous dialects of the Algonkins and their neighbors, and made for himself a reputation for prudence and judgment and the tact so necessary to carry one through the Indian country. Father Dablon, Superior General of the Mission of the Society of

Jesus, speaks of him as a man of discretion and of "a courage to fear nothing where all is to be feared"; while in both the Jesuit and the civil reports he is spoken of as a man of unusual ability, "who might be trusted to do difficult work." Talon therefore selected to find the Mississippi him who then was probably the one man in all Canada the best equipped for this difficult task.

Jolliet left Quebec early in the fall of 1672; and Governor Frontenac, Talon having been recalled, wrote to Minister Colbert: "I have deemed it expedient for the service to send the Sieur Jolliet to discover the South Sea, by the Maskoutins country, and the great river Mississippi, which is believed to empty into the California Sea. He is a man of experience in this kind of discovery, and has already been near the great river, of which he promises to see the mouth."

As was customary on all such expeditions, the exploring party was accompanied by a priest; and Jolliet was directed to take with him as his missionary chaplain the Jesuit Father Jacques Marquette, then stationed at the Ottawa Mission at St. Ignace, on the mainland opposite the island of Mackinac. The selection is said to have been made at Jolliet's request; for the two young men were acquaintances, if not friends, and may even have talked over such an enterprise at the Jesuit house

at Quebec; for of course the quest of the Mississippi was then in many minds besides that of the Intendant Talon. It was, in fact, the geographical problem of the time in New France, the solution of which must have lured Jolliet, as we know a burning desire to see the Illinois in their own country made this quest, when the orders came, a God-sent privilege to Marquette.

Jacques Marquette is the best beloved of all the priestly figures concerned in the exploration of the Mississippi Valley. A man of most loveable disposition and of the sincerest piety, he was also, as Father Claude Dablon wrote after his death, a man of "unrivaled zeal, and angelic chastity, an incomparable kindness and sweetness, a childlike candor, a very close union with God."

Born at Laon, France, on June 1, 1637, he was the son of one of the oldest and most conspicuous families of that ancient and renowned city. Beginning with Vermand Marquette, a follower of Louis-le-Jeune (1137-1180), his ancestors were faithful servants of the King, holding intimate relations to the person of the Crown as well as important commissions in the royal service and recipients of the royal favor at frequent intervals for five hundred years. Nicolas Marquette, the father of Jacques, was himself an eminent civil magistrate who suffered temporary loss of his wealth and banishment

from his native town because of his loyalty to Henry IV. (1587-1610) during the latter's contest with the League, a fidelity that was richly rewarded when Henry's cause proved triumphant. Considering the marked fidelity and attachment of the Marquettes to the Crown, it is not a little remarkable that no less than four members of this royalist family should have served in the French army in America during our struggle against George of England and that three of them should have laid down their lives in that generous service. The fourth, who served under Washington, returned to Laon, where he died in 1811.*

The Marquettes were churchmen of course; but the piety of Jacques was inherited from his mother, the gentle Rose de la Salle, whose ancestor, the noted Jean Baptiste de la Salle, had founded the Order of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, which, anticipating by many generations the modern free school system, gave free instruction to thousands of poor boys of France. After Marquette's death, his sister Françoise, in 1685, founded a similar order, the Marquette Sisters, which still exists under the name of the Sisters of the Providence of Laon.

Jacques Marquette was the youngest of a family of six children. Although, as we have seen, he

* THWAITES: "Father Marquette." Ch. I.

came of the warrior and governing class, the gentle hearted youth, doubtless through the influence of his mother, elected to become a priest and a Jesuit missionary. For this office he was educated at the neighboring city of Nancy, where in 1654 we find him, at seventeen, entered as a novice. On completing his studies he became a teacher, notably at Reimes, Charleville and Langres.

But so zealous a soul, impatient always for the day when he should be called to devote himself to the toil and the suffering and the self-sacrifice of the foreign missionary, could not but welcome the chance to take part in the heroic and dangerous service and to share in the martyrdom of the Jesuit Fathers then carrying on in North America "one of the most remarkable missionary enterprises in all history,"* the story of which was being told from year to year in the annual *Relations* sent to Paris by the fathers superior resident in America. He bided his time in patience, and at length in 1666 received the welcome order to proceed to New France to prepare for the work of a forest missionary.

Marquette arrived at Quebec on September 20, 1666, after a long voyage, at an era of Atlantic navigation when even the quickest passage was an experience but little short of physical martyrdom;

* THWAITES: "Father Marquette."

yet after but twenty days of rest he was sent by the Father Superior, François le Mercier, to Three Rivers "to be the pupil of Father Drüilletts in the Montagnais language." Here during the succeeding two years, in spite of the all but insurmountable difficulties of Indian languages, Marquette is said to have completely mastered no less than six root tongues, with most of their dialects. It was a wonderful feat of linguistic acquisition and distinguishes him as the man of his time having the greatest command of Indian languages in the Northwest.

From Three Rivers he went (1668) to Sault de Ste. Marie, to the Ottawa Mission, where with Father Dablon, his superior, he built a church. In 1669 he was sent to La Pointe, on Chequamegon Bay, Lake Superior, succeeding Father Allouez. Here he met members of the Illinois tribes, who went there to trade and who told him of their own country as well as of the "Great River." The missionary's was an all but hopeless task there; and Indian wars, in which the Sioux appeared, soon drove him back to Mackinac (1671), whence he was transferred to St. Ignace, on the mainland opposite. Here he built a chapel, "the first sylvan shrine to Catholicity at Mackinaw,"* and in this laborious post the pious priest found need for all

* SHEA: "Discovery and Exploration of the Mississippi Valley."

his patience and christian fortitude. Yet he was happy, though suffering all conceivable bodily discomfort and mental anxiety, if an opportunity offered he might but have the blessed privilege of opening by the baptismal sacrament "the doors of bliss to the dying infant or more aged repenting sinner." Here he remained until summoned (1672) to join Jolliet in the discovery and exploration of the Mississippi.



LOOKING FROM TOP OF STARVED ROCK TOWARD NORTHWEST.
THE SITE OF LA VANTUM ON THE LOW GROUND IN THE EXTREME LEFT DISTANCE

THE DISCOVERY.

Oh, Jolliet, what splendid faery dream
Met thy regard, when on that mighty stream,
Bursting upon its lonely unknown flow,
Thy keel historic cleft its golden tide:—
Blossomed thy lips with what stern smile of pride?
What conquering light shone on thy lofty brow?

—*Fréchette*.*

VOYAGE OF JOLLIET AND MARQUETTE.

Jolliet arrived at Point St. Ignace from Quebec on December 8, 1672, at the opening of the northern winter. Father Marquette welcomed both him and his instructions. "The day of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Virgin whom I had continually invoked since coming to the country of the Ottawas, to obtain from God the favor of being enabled to visit the nations on the river Mississippi —this very day was precisely that on which M. Jolliet arrived with orders to go with him on this discovery," he writes in his journal of this memorable voyage. "I was all the more delighted with this news because I saw my plans about to be accomplished, and found myself in the happy necessity of exposing my life for the salvation of all those tribes, especially the Illinois, who, when I

* Translated by W. W. Campbell F.R.S.C. for "The Story of Canada."

was at St. Esprit, had begged me very earnestly to bring the word of God among them.”

During the long winter the two young men made every possible preparation for their voyage, by enquiry concerning the country of the savages who made Mackinaw a rendezvous during the winter months. “Because we were going to seek unknown countries we took every precaution in our power, so that if our undertaking were hazardous it should not be foolhardy. To that end,” he writes, “we obtained all the information we could from the savages who frequented these regions; and we even traced out from their report a map of the whole of that new country.”

On May 17, 1673, the explorers set out from St. Ignace, accompanied by five *voyageurs*, all in two birch-bark canoes. For the voyage they carried Indian corn and some jerked meat, as well as suitable goods as presents to the natives they expected to meet on the way. “At the outset Marquette placed the enterprise under the patronage of the Immaculate Virgin, promising that if she granted them success, the river should be named ‘The Conception.’ This pledge he strove to keep; but an Indian word, the very meaning of which has been disputed, is its designation.”*

Coasting along the shore of Lake Michigan until

* HINSDALE: “The Old Northwest.”

they reached Green Bay, they entered that body of water and came at length to Fox River, "the joy that we felt at being selected for this expedition animating our courage and rendering the work of paddling from morning to night agreeable to us," writes Marquette.

Ascending Fox River to the portage to the Wisconsin, which they knew would lead them to the "Great River," they followed the latter stream until on June 17, a month to a day from Mackinaw, the expanse of the Mississippi burst upon their view. They gazed enraptured—"a joy that I cannot express," wrote Marquette. Not forgetting the haughty man at Quebec, "whose fortunes he felt he was bearing," Jolliet named the river "La Baude," in recognition of Frontenac's family; but Marquette, with devotion to the great dogma of his church and with reverence for his vow, named it "The Conception," "with something of the fervor which had warmed the Spaniard who a century and a half before, had bestowed upon it at its mouth the name of the "Holy Spirit."* Enraptured though they were, not even the boldest flight of their imaginations measured the greatness of the valley they had opened to European gaze or was adequate to express the vastness of the

* WINSOR: "Cartier to Frontenac." Marquette also records the fact that the Indians called the river "Missipi."

territorial empire they were that day adding to the possessions of France.

Descending the great river was an easy task; and Marquette's journal becomes a moving tale, in which all the magnificence of the country in the livery of primeval nature, seen in the glory of mid-summer, is noted by the historian of the expedition; but it is not necessary here to follow the explorers as they continued that portion of their journey. Having on July 17 reached a point below the mouth of the Arkansas River, and having satisfied themselves that the river did not flow to the "Sea of Virginia" or into the "California Sea," but to the Gulf of Mexico, they turned their canoes toward Canada and home.

When they reached the mouth of the Illinois (Riviere de Divine)*, having been assured by the Indians that here was the shorter and more direct route to the Lac des Illinois, they entered and followed it to the northeast, delighted with the stream and the country it watered. "We had never seen anything like this river," writes Marquette, "for the richness of the soil, the prairies and woods, the buffaloes, the elks, the deer, the wild cats, the bustards, the wild geese, the ducks, the paroquets and

* Jolliet gave the Illinois the name Divine, or Outrelaise, in compliment, it is supposed, to Frontenac's wife, noted for her beauty, and Mlle. Outrelaise, her fascinating friend, who were called in court circles *les divines*.—WINSOR: "Cartier to Frontenac."

even the beavers. It is made up of little lakes and little rivers. That upon which we voyaged is wide, deep and gentle for sixty-five leagues.”



MARQUETTE'S GENUINE MAP.

In ascending the Illinois Marquette records one stop, made with the Peorias, an Illinois tribe, the location not being mentioned; but he says he there “baptized a dying infant a little while before it

died, by an admirable providence, for the salvation of its innocent soul," the tender record of undoubtedly the first baptism in Illinois if not in the Mississippi Valley. Higher up the stream the explorers came to the village of the Illinois, called the Kaskaskias, containing seventy-four cabins, where, says Marquette, they were kindly received by the inhabitants who "compelled me to promise to return and instruct them."

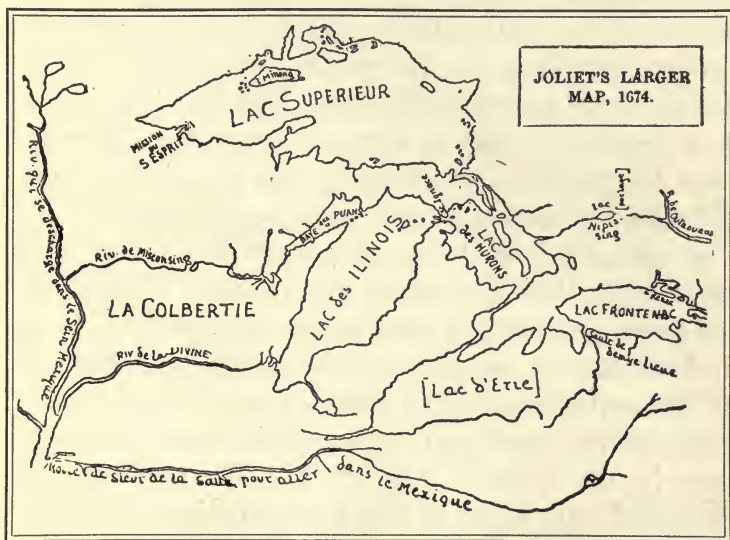
This village was located on the north bank of the Illinois River about a mile west, below Starved Rock; so that Marquette's record is the first mention in history of a site closely allied to the story of Starved Rock and that supplies a peculiarly interesting chapter of the annals of the Church in Illinois.

The discoverers remained at Kaskaskia but three days, and then one of the chiefs with his young men escorted them to the lake, *via* the Chicago portage,* whence they pushed on toward Green Bay. Where now is the canal uniting Green Bay with Lake Michigan was then a portage, which gave the travelers access to the present Sturgeon Bay, on whose waters they found easy paddling to the last rapids of Fox River and the mission of St. Fran-

* The historians are inclined to say their route was *via* the Desplaines River rather than by the Calumet, chiefly for the reason that in returning to the Illinois in 1674, Marquette took the former route.

cois Xavier, where, at the end of September, they found friends and rest, after having traversed in canoes a distance of something like twenty-five hundred miles.

Having been transferred during his absence on



JOLLIET'S MAP OF THE ILLINOIS.*

the Illinois to the St. Francois Xavier Mission (now DePere, Wis.), Marquette at the end of his long journey was at home. The season being too far advanced to proceed to Quebec, Jolliet also

*Jolliet's Map is reduced from a reproduction in WINSOR: "Cartier to Frontenac."

tarried there, utilizing the delay by preparing his report and enjoying his rest, while taking part also in the activities going on always in connection with a forest mission. Marquette's weaker constitution was so seriously impaired by the fatigues of the exploration that he never afterward became a well man. He performed, indeed, all the duties of his priestly office, but illness followed him so relentlessly that it was not until the following year he was able to complete his report and send it to his Father Superior, Dablon, at Quebec.

Jolliet reached Quebec to report to the Governor in August, 1674; but when within sight of Montreal his canoe was overturned in the rapids of St. Louis and his box of papers, together with his maps and all the collections of his journey were lost, while he himself was saved only after having lost consciousness in the water. Two of his companions were drowned. It is due to this accident that the report of Marquette to Father Dablon became the history of the discovery of the Mississippi, rather than that of Jolliet, chief of the expedition. Transmitted by Dablon to Paris, Marquette's narrative was published in an abridged and altered form by Thevenot in 1681, accompanied by a map purported to have been made by Marquette; and thus by force of circumstances Marquette's name was given a prominence as the apparent leader of a voyage of dis-

covery, that he himself least of all expected or would have desired at the expense of his friend and fellow traveler, Jolliet, who was the official head of the adventure.

On reaching Quebec Jolliet made a verbal report of his discovery to Governor Frontenac. This report the latter at once sent to Colbert, accompanied by his personal estimate of the extent and character as well as the importance of the discovery. This statement remained buried in French archives until the middle of the last century, when it was first published in Vol. IX of the New York Colonial Documents. Jolliet further addressed a report to Frontenac, descriptive of the flora and fauna and the natural features of the lands he had seen in the West; but this document also was hidden from the public until 1872 when it was first published.*

The great discovery by Jolliet and Marquette did not at first prompt the French to any schemes

* Jolliet's subsequent career was, of course, an active and useful one. In 1675 he married Francoise Bissot, daughter of a rich merchant, who became the mother of Jolliet's three sons and four daughters. Four years later he applied for a trading concession in the "Illinois country," but it was refused by the court at Paris, on the ground that such a project was not then advisable. At another time we find him nobly protesting against the sale of liquor to the Indians, which he characterized as a crime that should be punished with death. Again, as administrator of his father-in-law Bissot's estate, he visited the Hudson Bay country, reporting on his return that he had found the English established there, and recommending that if they were not at once ejected the trade of France would be ruined.

It was not until about 1679 that the official recognition long his due

for planting colonies in the rich country of the Mississippi Valley, and a plan of settlement proposed by Jolliet was rejected by the Court as premature. It was only when the activity of the English in New York menaced the French fur trade that the struggle for dominion in the Mississippi Valley and the career of La Salle began.

came to Jolliet. In that year he was granted possession of the Mingan Islands, along the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to which in 1680 was added the island of Anticosti, the deed to the latter grant expressly stating that the concession was made in recognition of Jolliet's great services in the West. Jolliet proceeded with his family to Anticosti where he built a warehouse and settled down to trade and to engage in the fisheries. Being a hydrographer also he made a chart of the St. Lawrence River. In 1689 he was sent to Mackinac, on order of Frontenac, on behalf of the Jesuits, to announce to Durantaye, the commandant, that the Hurons, Ottawas, and other tribes were treating with the Iroquois and had sent back their prisoners and were preparing to join the Iroquois and the English with their warriors to act against the French. (LE CLERQ: "First Establishment of the Faith in New France.") His family continued to reside at Anticosti until in 1690 his property was burned and his wife and her mother taken prisoners by Sir William Phipps, when the latter was on his way to unsuccessfully attack Quebec.

Still later Jolliet was sent to explore the coast of Labrador, which he did in 1694, acting as official hydrographer in succession to Franquelin. On April 30, 1697, he was granted a seignory on the River Chaudière, still called by his name; and there he died in the year 1700, leaving behind him a family whose posterity still honor his name and look with pride to him as their ancestor.

Jolliet was assuredly one of the most daring of the explorers of the West, an industrious and honest man but not a very strong character, perhaps. As we have seen, he was one whom circumstances contributed to deprive for a time of a material reward and for a longer period of his just fame as the finder of the Mississippi instead of the mere follower of the priest, the saintly Marquette, who would have been the last of men to seek so great renown for himself at the expense of his friend, and who would have deemed a commission to find the "great river" or to found an empire a slight honor compared with an order to risk all to preach the Gospel to the Illinois.

LA SALLE IN ILLINOIS.

Planting strange fruits and sunshine on the shore
I make some coast alluring, some lone isle,
To distant men who must go there or die.

—Emerson.

LA SALLE'S EARLY DISCOVERIES.

After Champlain the greatest name in the history of French exploration in North America is that of René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, or, more simply, La Salle, as he will be known for all time. Born at Rouen in 1643, like many another man of his century whose name has become linked with the fate of the French church or state in New France, La Salle came from a family of rich burghers and merchants who lived like princes rather than as men of the people. He was liberally educated and became especially proficient in mathematics. An earnest Catholic and a serious youth, he early was fascinated by that magnificent organism, the Society of Jesus, and for a time he was connected with the order. But in the very nature of things so independent a spirit as La Salle could not long endure what to him must have been the chafing discipline of the Society nor submit to the abnegation of self which that discipline required and com-



*A René Cavelier by
La Salle & De La Salle*

[This picture is made from a photograph of the original painting by G. P. A. Healey for the Chicago Historical Society, by whose courtesy it is here published. The portrait is that of La Salle appearing in the plate printed in the chapter with the caption "Kismet," entitled "The Murder of Mons'r de La Salle." It was published by Margry in his "Mémoires et Documents," etc., without comment, and is of questionable value as a portrait, although quite generally now accepted as such.]

pelled; and so he withdrew, honorably and on good terms, we may be sure, but withal retaining thereafter an inveterate dislike for and distrust of the Society and its members.

This connection having under the law of the time deprived him of his share of his father's estate, he was given an allowance by the family of a few hundred francs annually, the capital of which was paid to him in 1666; and with this meagre pittance he came to North America, at the age of twenty-three. Although he obtained from the Seminary of St. Sulpice of Montreal a grant of land on Montreal Island at a place now called La Chine,* and there set up as a sort of feudal lord and trader, in the most dangerous spot for a Frenchman in North America, there is good reason for believing that he had other and more far reaching projects in mind, and that the La Chine establishment was but a means to a greater end; and when a band of Senecas, his guests one winter, told him of a river called the Oyo (Ohio) that rose in their country and at a distance of eight moons' journey emptied into the sea, "his hour had come." In order to finance the expedition which this information suggested, the first step doubtless in the career he had mapped out for himself before leaving France, he sold his

* In derision of La Salle, who later failed as an explorer to solve the geographical problem of all western exploration—the western route to China.

improvements at La Chine to the Seminary, and having obtained official authority therefor from Governor Courcelle, and being encouraged thereto by the Intendant Talon, he started in 1669 with four canoes and fourteen men in search of the Ohio.

With this journey this narrative has no special concern. In relation to it, the curious reader is referred to PARKMAN: "La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West," and to WINSOR: "Cartier to Frontenac." That La Salle discovered and explored the Ohio, at least to the falls of Louisville, is not now doubted; for France repeatedly based her claim to possession of the interior of the continent upon that discovery; but where else La Salle was during the two years of his absence is not so clear. It is claimed that during this time he saw both the Mississippi and the Illinois as well as the Ohio; but all is uncertain. Parkman concludes that the evidence does not support a claim to the discovery of the Mississippi, and La Salle himself never made such a claim; but Parkman says La Salle "discovered the Ohio and in all probability the Illinois also."* At any rate, in all his subsequent movements in the Illinois country La Salle showed perfect familiarity with the geography of both Lake Michigan and the water routes from the lake to the Illinois River itself, even before Jol-

* PARKMAN: "La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West."

liet's and Marquette's discoveries had become generally known.

La Salle returned to Canada in 1671 or 1672 and attached himself to the fortunes of Governor Frontenac, waiting until the time was ripe for the development of his plan.

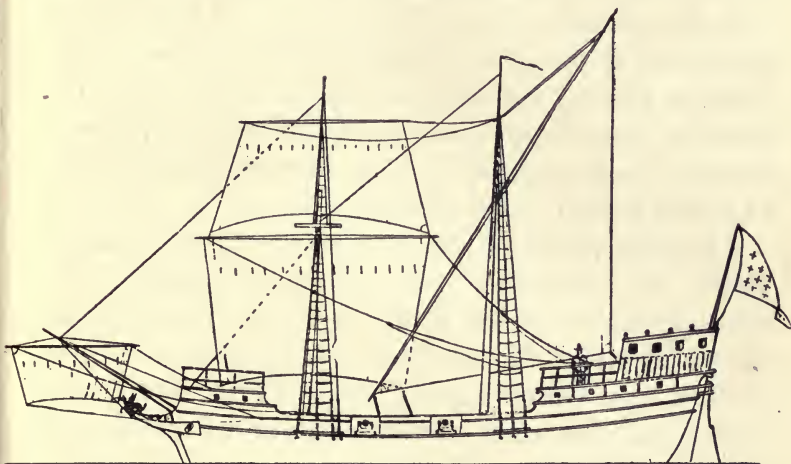
This was so daring in conception and so far reaching in its political scope, that one can readily see how La Salle might acquire a reputation, as he did, as a visionary, when he talked of seizing an unexplored continent in order to anticipate its appropriation by another people with whom the French in Canada had thus far come in contact only indirectly, as the almoners of the Iroquois. Frontenac was a statesman. At least, he could see, as Talon had seen before him, the political wisdom of La Salle's design, which was no less than to reach the mouth of the Mississippi *via* the Illinois (for the Iroquois had closed the route *via* Chataqua, French Creek and the Allegheny to the Ohio, also a less feasible waterway than the Illinois) and take verbal possession of the country. Then by closing the mouth of the river with a fort and by placing others along the route from Montreal to the Gulf, he could hold the interior against all invaders and thus add the greater part of the continent to the possessions of Louis XIV. in America. Eventually the center of

French dominion in North America could be transferred from the then bleak and inhospitable Canada to the fertile valley of the Mississippi, which by agriculture and trade would sooner or later become the seat of a flourishing people. It was a grand and eminently practicable conception which not many years after La Salle's death became the policy of the Paris government, with what success the history of the Franco-English struggle in America in the eighteenth century tells us.

Returning to France in 1674 La Salle unfolded his great project at the court of Louis the Magnificent. He found ready listeners and was measurably successful. As a reward for his discovery of the Ohio, La Salle was ennobled; and by the eloquence of his pleading for his great project, he obtained possession of Fort Frontenac as well as liberal grants of lands adjoining, together with exclusive trading privileges both on Lake Ontario and in the new lands of the Illinois country which he was to explore and settle. All was to be done at his own individual expense, however.

Having established himself at Fort Frontenac (now Kingston, Ont.), La Salle began his work of exploration and settlement of the West by building Fort Conti on Niagara River to control that portage; after which, in the summer of 1679 he built the Griffin, a vessel of forty-five tons burden,

the first of the vessels to engage in what has since become the vast commerce of the Great Lakes. In this vessel on August 7, 1679, he set sail for Michilimackinac and Green Bay. At the first named place he established a trading post and left his



THE GRIFFIN.*

lieutenant, Henri de Tonty and about twenty men, with instructions to proceed along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan to the mouth of the St. Joseph

*The Griffin was built on Little Niagara River, at a point just beyond the bend of the river above La Salle, N. Y. It was between 45 and 60 tons burden; and the correct rig of the vessel was probably substantially that of the picture, which was made by R. P. Joy of Detroit, who found the original in a French book attributed to Hennepin, published in 1711. At least, the rig is historically correct, being the prevailing one of the period (1679).

River, while he himself proceeded to Green Bay. Having there taken on a load of furs, he ordered the Griffin to proceed to Niagara to unload her rich cargo and then to return with supplies to the St. Joseph River, while he himself proceeded along the west shore to the same place with fourteen men, including Father Louis Hennepin and two friars, Zenobius Membré and Gabriel Ribourde; for La Salle, a zealous Catholic, although no friend of the Jesuits, was always accompanied by holy fathers, among whom he had no more admiring and faithful friend than Father Membré.

La Salle reached the mouth of the St. Joseph River in November, in advance of Tonty; and while waiting for the latter and his party to come up, he occupied his men, who were anxious to proceed before winter set in, by building here a fort and station buildings, which he called Fort Miami. He thus secured and fortified the key to the Illinois *via* the Kankakee and placed the third of his chain of forts between Fort Frontenac and the mouth of the Mississippi. On November 12 Tonty arrived, bringing, however, only half of his original party and the ominous news that the Griffin had not reached Mackinac and had not been heard of after leaving Green Bay. And La Salle waited with dark forebodings in his heart.

At length, no Griffin appearing, nor any of

Tonty's stragglers and further delay being impossible, La Salle attached to trees written instructions to the pilot of the Griffin, in the event of his arrival; and on December 3, with twenty-nine Frenchmen and Le Loup, a Mohegan hunter, set out for the Illinois and the Mississippi. At about seventy miles above the fort, near the site of the present city of South Bend, Ind., they found the portage from the St. Joseph to the Kankakee (Theakiki) River, and on December 6 floated their canoes on this branch of the Illinois and so entered the valley of the Mississippi. The journey was a dreary and painful one. Ice impeded their progress through a country that everywhere for miles was a half-frozen marshy wilderness, rarely affording comfortable camping grounds, while the autumnal prairie fires of the Indians had driven away the game; so that subsistence itself was a difficult problem. After some days they reached the more elevated prairie of the Illinois country and the open river; and when their distress from hunger was most acute, a buffalo mired on the shore was killed, and food was again plenty.

By this time they had reached the junction with the Desplaines and were on the broad and open river, with easy paddling until they came to the grand rapids of the Illinois between the present town of Marseilles and the city of Ottawa. Then

they passed the mouth of Fox River, called by the Indians Pesticoui, coming soon after to the isolated and striking plateau now called Buffalo Rock, a few miles beyond which, having passed the "lonè cliff" now called Starved Rock, they reached the untenanted huts constituting the village home of the Kaskaskias, where in 1675 Father Marquette had planted his mission to the Illinois and which Father Allouez, his successor, had abandoned when he heard of La Salle's approach, attaching himself to wandering bands of Miamis and other savages during their winter hunting.

This village of the Kaskaskia tribe of the Illinois, called by the French La Vantum, lay at the edge of a marshy plain upon the right (north) bank of the Illinois River, about a mile to the south and half a mile west of the present village of Utica. Hennepin says there were in the village at that time four hundred and sixty lodges, arranged in rows and built like long narrow arbors, with their sides and roofs covered with thick double mats of rushes to keep out the wind and the weather. Each hut, or lodge, had five or six fires, each fire serving for one or two families, thus indicating a population of four to five thousand souls.*

* Allouez in 1677 found but 351 lodges. Marquette in 1675 records that he there addressed 500 chiefs and 1,500 young men and also women and children. Father Membre in 1680 says the population was 7,000 to 8,000. Franquelin, 1684, says about 6,000.

It was now the end of the year, approaching mid-winter, and the tribes had gone to their winter hunting grounds. A search of the village revealed the corn caches, or covered storage pits; and urged by his great need therefor, La Salle took a few bushels of corn, although he well knew that in doing so he would give deep offense. He left presents, however, in compensation, and hoped to make amends otherwise when he should meet the owners.

On New Year's Day, 1680, Father Hennepin having said mass and in an address extended to all the good wishes of the day, "*que je pus*," La Salle resumed his journey. After four days they came to the body of water now known as Peoria Lake, called by the Indians Pimiteoui ("a place of many fat beasts"), near the lower end of which they found an encampment of eighty lodges of the Illinois. The Indians were taken by surprise and thrown into a panic by the arrival of the French, and hastily prepared for defense. La Salle and his men boldly landed at once, but passively awaited the event. When the Indians saw there was no disposition on the part of La Salle to attack them, they offered the calumet of peace, to which La Salle responded promptly; and soon, with the friars' aid, confidence was restored and Indian hospitality offered and accepted. Presents were distributed and apology made for the violation of the village caches.

Then La Salle stated his intention to erect a fort among them and to make a "big canoe" to descend to the sea. He expressed also his desire to trade with them and to protect them from the Iroquois. The Illinois were pleased with all this; and "feasts and dances consumed the day."*

The sinister influences, however, that seemed everywhere and at all times to hedge La Salle about were felt even here and at once; for this day, that promised so well, had not ended before a Mascoutin chief named Monso appeared with several attendants bearing presents for the Illinois; and in an all-night harangue, laden with insinuations, roused the suspicions of the Illinois. Finally he openly denounced La Salle as a spy and partisan of the Iroquois. In this attack La Salle believed he saw the instigations of Allouez the Jesuit, who was in the neighborhood; but by his natural skill in finesse, aided by his knowledge of Indian character, he was able to restore himself to the confidence of the Illinois. He succeeded less with his own men, however; for he had hardly foiled his enemies among the savages than six of his party deserted him in the night and fled into the wilderness. This defection was a serious and alarming blow to La Salle, but with characteristic fortitude and assurance he proceeded with his work.

* PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.; MASON: "The Land of the Illinois."

Separating his men from the Indian camp, on January 15 he began building a fort on a low hill on the left bank of the river some two and a half miles below its outlet from the lake. Within this enclosure he erected his storehouse, set up a forge and made habitations for his men, thus completing the fourth link in his chain of forts, or stations, between Fort Frontenac and the Gulf and making the first establishment of white men in the Mississippi Valley. This fort he called Crève-cœur (“broken heart”), a name whose significance in this instance is open to various interpretations.

The fort completed, La Salle began work on the vessel in which he intended to descend the Mississippi. He himself and two others, volunteers (for his sawyers were among the deserters), began cutting the planks, and by March 1 the keel of a vessel forty-two feet long and twelve feet of beam was laid. But as the craft would be without iron, cordage or sails, of which the loss of the Griffin had deprived him, La Salle undertook to go himself to Canada for these necessary articles.

In the meantime La Salle had become interested in the Sioux and other Indians of the Northwest, some of whom had wintered near him on the Illinois; and he determined to send a party to explore their country. He selected for this expedition two of his best and most faithful men,—one Michael

Ako (or Accau, or Accault, the name is variously spelled), a native of Poitou, whose name appears several times in the annals of this neighborhood, and Antony Auguel. Ako he appointed as leader, and to him he committed a quantity of goods for trade, and directed Father Hennepin to accompany him on a journey which the Priest's own narrative has made famous. This expedition left Crève-cœur on February 29, 1680; and on the following day, La Salle, accompanied by six white men and his Mohegan hunter, set out for his fort at Frontenac, leaving Tonty in command of the remainder of his men at the fort.

The journey was one of exhausting labor and most intense bodily discomfort. The ice still covered the river and the flat, marshy valley for long stretches, making it necessary to haul the canoes on sleds; and there was almost continuous rain, with sleet and snow, that delayed them for days together. When a welcome frost came, covering the country with ice, they travelled rapidly on snowshoes, and by March 10 they again came to the deserted Indian town they had left behind them on January 1. Here for several days they rested in the empty lodges. Here too La Salle met the Illinois chief Chassagoac, with whom he bargained for a canoe load of corn from the caches, which he sent by two of his men to Tonty. La Salle took further

advantage of this meeting with the Illinois chief to unfold to the friendly savage his plans of trade, in which Chassagoac saw much of advantage to his people. He thereupon pledged his influence and aid in behalf of the Frenchmen, while La Salle in turn promised to use his good offices to bring about a lasting peace with the Iroquois, those inveterate scourges of the Western wilderness and of the Illinois in particular.

It was at this time that La Salle's attention was especially drawn to the isolated sandstone cliff standing on the left bank of the river about a mile above the Kaskaskia village, which he had noticed a few weeks before. Impressed by its natural strength and by its proximity to the permanent village of the Illinois, he resolved to change his base from Crèvecœur to this place; and when on March 24 he reached his Fort Miami and found there La Chapelle and Le Blanc, two men whom he had in November sent to Mackinac in search of the Griffin, he ordered them to join Tonty at Crèvecœur, carrying letters directing Tonty to examine the Rock (Le Rocher), and, if he thought best, to abandon the lower fort and build one upon the Rock.* The Rock was admirably adapted for

* The late Edward G. Mason, "Chapters from Illinois History," p. 81, says: "The new site was not the bold bluff . . . known in our time as Starved Rock. At this period the great Indian village was some eight miles above this point, and the high rock in its [the vil-

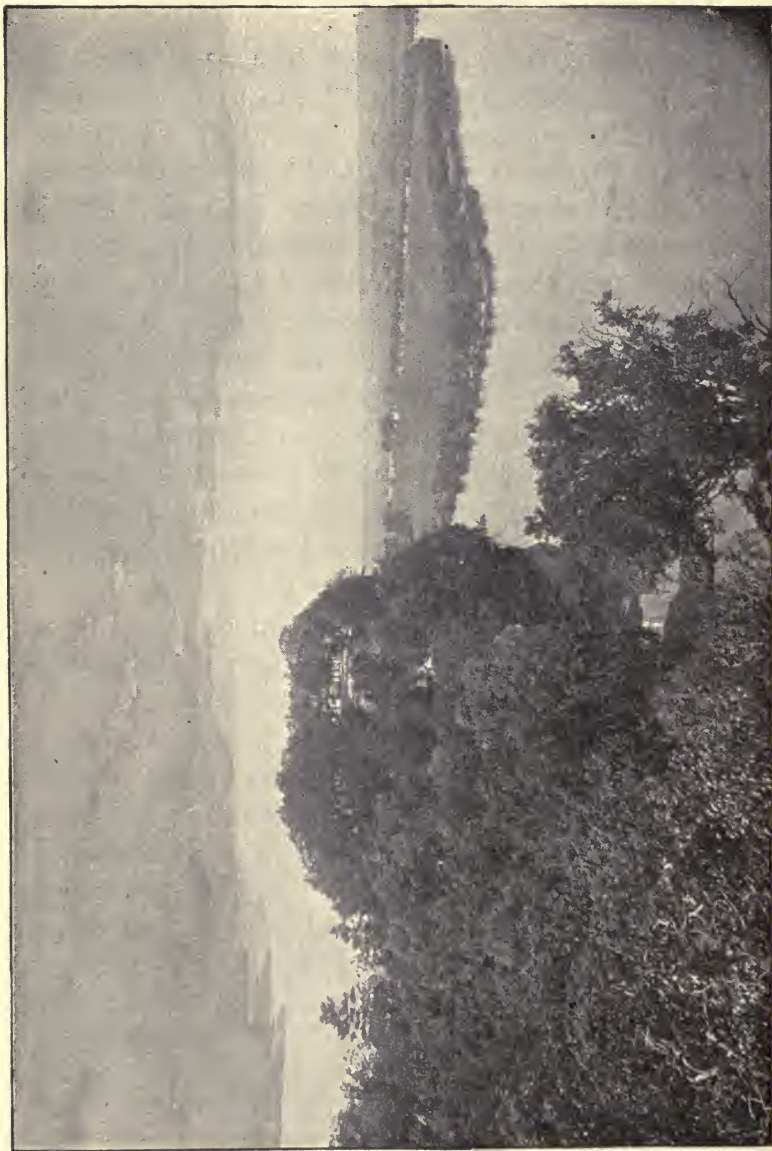
La Salle's purpose. In the hands of a few men, it commanded, as could no other place along the entire river, this waterway for all travel from the Lakes to the Mississippi, and in addition to being in the midst of a fertile country, it overlooked the great Indian town which would be the center of an immense Indian trade.

Quitting Fort Miami, La Salle and his men plunged into the sodden and terrifying wilderness of southern Michigan to make his way to Niagara. The journey to Lake Erie was one of the most desperate character. The land was drowned in the floods of the spring "break up," and signs of hostile Indians were so numerous that fires were always hazardous. In a few days, of the party of six only La Salle and the Mohegan were in traveling condition; so that when at last they reached Detroit River La Salle sent two of them, those in the worst physical condition, to Mackinac as the nearest refuge, while with the others he pressed on to his own post at Niagara. On Easter Monday he landed at this station, at or near the spot where they had built the Griffin. Leaving here his exhausted followers, and taking with him three fresh men,

lage's?] neighborhood referred to by La Salle was probably that known today as Buffalo Rock, or one of the bluffs near it." This is a revival of the blunder of Sparks; and the statement of Mr. Mason is itself the best of evidence that Mr. Mason could never have made a personal examination of the localities in question, as his knowledge of the topography is quite inexact.

La Salle resumed his journey, and on May 6, having crossed Ontario in a torrent of rain, he entered the familiar gates of his own Fort Frontenac. "During sixty-five days he had toiled almost incessantly, traveling by the course he took about a thousand miles through a country beset with every form of peril and obstruction; 'the most arduous journey,' says the chronicler, 'ever made by Frenchmen in America.' Such was the Cavalier de la Salle. In him an unconquerable mind held at its service a frame of iron and tested it to the utmost of its endurance. The pioneer of western pioneers was no rude son of toil, but a man of thought, trained amid arts and letters."*

* PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.



STARVED ROCK. FROM THE EAST.

A YEAR OF DISASTER.

The oxen were plowing
and the asses feeding beside them
and the Sabeans fell upon them
and took them away.

—*Job.*

THE WORK OF THE IROQUOIS.

Within the walls of Fort Frontenac La Salle was at home; but he was not at rest, either mentally or physically. At his Niagara fort he had faced the fact he may have refused to admit, that the Griffin was lost irretrievably, with its rich cargo of furs. He learned there also that a ship from France with a valuable cargo of his goods and twenty men for his colony had been wrecked in the St. Lawrence, the goods being lost, and that of twenty men it brought only four were faithful to him. At Frontenac he found his affairs in confusion. His agent in his absence had acted in bad faith, and his creditors were about to seize everything. Yet within a week at Montreal he had arranged his finances and procured the necessary supplies for the relief of Tonty; and he was about to set out again for the Illinois when two men sent by Tonty arrived from the Illinois with the discouraging news that shortly after he had left Crèvecœur all but four of his

men had mutinied; that they had demolished the fort and stolen his goods, destroying what they could not carry off; and had decamped. And we are reminded of the swift succession of the misfortunes that fell upon Job when we learn that this disaster had but been told him when there came to La Salle two of his men in hot haste from Mackinac and the Lakes to tell him that the Crève-cœur deserters, with other scoundrels of the woods, had plundered and destroyed his Fort Miami, had seized his stock of furs at Mackinac, and had just rifled Fort Conti at Niagara, where they had divided into two bands, one going to Albany, then a harborage of thieves of that sort, while the other party of twelve men were even now on their way to Frontenac to kill him.

Acting with characteristic energy La Salle intercepted this latter body of men, and captured all but two who on resisting arrest were shot. The prisoners were taken to Frontenac and held for sentence by the governor, while La Salle turned again to the succor of Tonty.

On August 6, 1680, La Salle again set out for the Illinois, accompanied by Francois de la Forest, as his lieutenant, and twenty-four men, soldiers, artisans, voyageurs and laborers. At Mackinac all was hostile. He left La Forest to collect the provisions La Salle could not himself buy and to form

his rear guard, while he himself pushed forward. On November 4 he reached the ruined Fort Miami, where he left heavy stores and a guard of five men to wait for the coming of La Forest. With the remainder of the men, a party of seven all told, he hurried on, full of anxiety and apprehension concerning Tonty, of whom he had heard nothing. The route was by the Kankakee trail; but unlike the year previous, the country now was teeming with game. On reaching the Illinois they stopped for a three days' hunt, and killed twelve buffalo besides many deer and waterfowl, whose meat they dried and smoked. The men were elated with the sport and the prospect of relieving Tonty and his companions with ample food.

The morale of the men was excellent. They were in fine spirits; but as they approached the great town of the Kaskaskias the oppressive quiet and apparent absence of human life filled them with apprehension. The great Rock of St. Louis, where La Salle had expected to find Tonty in a new stronghold, they found untenanted and undisturbed, "its primeval crest of forest still overhanging the river." Arriving soon after at the great town itself, they saw on all sides a scene of awful carnage and desolation. Everything was a waste. The lodges had been burned and many of the charred poles that had formed their frames

now carried human heads half picked by birds of prey. The dead were strewn over the plain; for even the burial place of the village had been defiled and the bodies flung down from their scaffolds; while noisome birds and animals feasted on the horrid carrion. La Salle knew it as the work of the Iroquois.* The conquerors had completed their work by opening and destroying the corn caches, whose contents they had burned in heaps or had scattered half burned over the plain.

But nowhere, either among the ruins of the village or in the cold camps of the Iroquois, could any trace be found of Tonty. Night came on, so bitterly cold that although fearful they were compelled to build fires. A watch was set, but they were not disturbed. All night long La Salle pondered, trying to make up his mind what to do. When morning came he had decided to go on. Two men were left near the Rock with the stores, which were hidden in the caves of the shore rocks; while the men themselves were lodged on an island just above the Rock and warned to keep themselves concealed. Well armed and provisioned, they awaited La Salle's return.

In descending the river La Salle could easily trace the flight of the Illinois and the pursuit; but nowhere was there any sign of Tonty or of any

* PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.

white man, although La Salle followed the river to its mouth. Here he stopped, putting behind him the temptation to abandon his men in the rear and go on to the Gulf; and having left letters on trees for Tonty, he retraced his way. At the Rock he found his waiting men, and then the united party continued to ascend the river. On January 6, 1681, they reached the junction of the Kankakee, and finding there no sign of Tonty, they chose the Desplaines, or "Checagou," route. Presently they came to a sort of rude cabin where they found a piece of sawed wood, which brought the relief of believing that Tonty had escaped the horrors of the massacre and had passed that way.

Hiding their canoes on the trail, La Salle and his men went across the country to Fort Miami, which they at last reached in safety, but only after a terrible march over a timberless country covered with a great fall of snow so light they could not use snow shoes, while they themselves were exposed to piercing cold made more terrible by high winds from off Lake Michigan. At Miami they found La Forest and all the men, housed in a rebuilt fort and surrounded by land cleared for the spring planting, while the timbers and planks for a new vessel for the lake were ready to be put together.

But no word of Tonty. Where was he?

When La Salle left Crèvecœur for Canada,

Tonty remained in command of fifteen men, only a few of whom had any heart in the enterprise for which they were engaged; and when the two men arrived from Fort Miami, bringing La Salle's letters and the news of the loss of the Griffin, they were all ripe for revolt. Taking advantage of the absence of Tonty, who with five men had gone to examine the Rock, the malcontents destroyed the Crève-cœur fort and all of La Salle's goods they could not carry away, and disappeared. Only the faithful Sieur de Boisrondet and La Salle's servant, l'Espérance, remained loyal. They hastened to Tonty with the evil news, who sent four of the men with himself in parties of two to notify La Salle. Two men, as we have seen, reached him; the others did not.

Tonty's force was thus reduced to three men and the two friars. Although the Illinois treated them with suspicion, Tonty boldly took up his abode in the village to await there La Salle's return. The spring and summer passed without event, and it was not until September that the terrible tedium of life in an Indian village was broken by a storm that brought desolation in its path. The crash came like lightning out of a clear sky. It was September 10, and the village lay in the lethargy of a warm summer day, when a Shawanoe, that morning a departing guest, recrossed the river in haste

with the news that he had seen in the woods of the Vermilion (Aramoni) River an Iroquois army coming to attack them. In an instant the village was in a tumult; and immediate vengeance seemed about to settle upon Tonty and his men, whom the Illinois accused of bringing the Iroquois upon them. Tonty's address and courage saved his



SCENE OF TONTY'S ENCOUNTER WITH IROQUOIS.

(Approximate.)

party; and next day when the fight began,* in the hope of saving the Illinois, naturally a cowardly race,† but friends of La Salle, Tonty undertook to prevent an encounter at arms. Laying aside his

* The scene was the prairie on the bluff south of the river, at the edge of the woods near the mouth of Vermilion River.

† PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.

gun and taking a necklace of wampum, he advanced to meet the Iroquois, accompanied by Boisrondet and a young Illinois warrior. "When I was within gunshot," writes Tonty, "the Iroquois shot at us, seized me, took the necklace from my hand, and one of them plunged a knife in my breast, wounding a rib near the heart. However, [a Seneca] having recognized me, they carried me into the midst of their camp, and asked what I came for. I gave them to understand that the Illinois were under the protection of the King of France and the governor of the country, and that I was surprised that they wished to break with the French and not continue at peace. At this time skirmishing was going on, on both sides, and a warrior came to give notice that the Iroquois left wing was giving way, and that they had recognized some Frenchmen among the Illinois, who had shot at them. On hearing this they were greatly irritated at me, and held a council on what they should do with me. There was a man behind me with a knife in his hand, who every now and then lifted my hair. They were divided in opinion. Tegantouki, a chief, desired to have me burnt. Agoasto, chief of the Onondagas, wished to have me set at liberty as the friend of M. de la Salle, and he carried his point. They agreed that in order to deceive the Illinois they should give me a necklace of porcelain

beads to prove that they were children of the governor, and ought to unite and make a good peace. They sent me to deliver this message to the Illinois. I had much difficulty in reaching them, on account of the blood I had lost. On my way I met the Fathers Ribourde and Membré who were coming to look after me. We went together to the Illinois, to whom I reported the sentiments of the Iroquois toward them, adding, however, that they must not altogether trust them.”*

The Illinois then returned to their village which, owing to the presence and arrogance of the Iroquois, the timid that night burned, taking advantage of the confusion of the fire to recover their women and children from an island where they had been placed and to steal away down the river, while the Iroquois took possession of the ruins and entrenched themselves there.

Two days later the Iroquois proposed a peace; but as it was a transparent pretext, Tonty advised the Illinois to get away as quickly and as far as possible, which they did. Still later the Iroquois eager to fall upon the Illinois but not daring to do so with Tonty about, went to him with presents of skins to induce (and also to threaten) him to leave at once; but Tonty rejected the gifts with contempt, whereupon the Iroquois peremptorily or-

* TONTY: "Memoir of 1693."

dered him to leave. Being unable to do anything more for the Illinois, Tonty obeyed. After the French had departed up the river, the Iroquois completed the ruin of the village, desecrated the graves of the Illinois and started in pursuit of the fugitives on the river. Those in flight suffered comparatively little, but they were literally driven out of the country. The kindred tribe of Tamaroas, however, who for some reason did not try to get away, were slaughtered in their village, near the mouth of the Illinois, with terrible cruelties and burnings.

Tonty and his friends left the ruined village on September 18, all in one poor canoe and with only scanty supplies of provisions and ammunition to reach succor on the Lakes. They had traveled until about noon of the following day when an accident to the canoe compelled a long halt, during which Father Ribourde, in spite of Tonty's warnings, retired apart to say his breviary and did not return, nor was he ever found. It was learned afterwards that he was murdered by a wandering band of Kickapoos—coyotes gleaning on the trail of the wolfish Iroquois. "So perished the first martyr upon Illinois soil, Gabriel de la Ribourde."*

* Gabriel de la Ribourde was the only son and heir of a gentleman of Burgundy. He was noted in France as in Canada for his piety

Unable to find Father Ribourde, the little party of five went on up the Illinois. At the junction with the Kankakee they unfortunately chose the Chicago route, and, believing La Salle to be dead, left no sign of their passing that way. As the winter came on the men suffered more and more from sickness, cold, hunger and privation of every kind, and it was not until in December that they were rescued from certain death by an accidental meeting with Indians near Sturgeon Bay in Wisconsin and taken to a Pottawatomie village, where both the Indians and some resident Frenchmen nursed Tonty back to life and health. Father Membré proceeded after resting to the St. Xavier (De Pere) Mission and reported the details of a journey comparable in toil and suffering only to that which La Salle himself had made across Michigan the previous winter.

and saintly devotion to the mission cause, for which he sacrificed every thing—home, friends, wealth, clerical position, his life. He was sixty-four years old.—MASON: "Chapters from Illinois History."



LA SALLE'S COLONY
 on the Illinois,
 FROM THE MAP OF FRANQUELIN,
 1684.

A YEAR OF SUCCESS.

With aching hands and bleeding feet,
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day and wish 'twere done.
Not till the hours of light return
All we have built do we discern.

—*Matthew Arnold.*

LA SALLE FOUNDS HIS COLONY.

La Salle spent the winter of 1680-81 at his Fort Miami, intent upon rebuilding his broken fortunes. "There is something almost touching the supernatural in the courage and resolution of La Salle," says Dunn.* "At that rude fort on the bank of the St. Joseph, in the discomforts of a severe winter, hundreds of miles from the French settlements, the faithful Tonty carried captive, killed or a fugitive, he knew not which, his remaining comrades disheartened, his colony swept from the face of the earth, his means dissipated by disasters of flood and field, this man calmly reconstructed his plans and prepared to renew his enterprise on a more extended basis than before."

First of all, he had to put an end to the incursions of the Iroquois—not a simple matter by any means. For the Iroquois were moved by more than their

* DUNN: "Indiana" (Am. Commonwealth Series), p. 26-7.

congenital bloodthirstiness to those fierce onslaughts that had made their name a terror in the West. By their contract with the whites they had acquired many new wants which only the white man could satisfy, while the game, under the pressure of more systematic commercial hunting, had begun to be scarcer and skins harder to obtain, making it necessary therefore for them to control wider hunting grounds in order to get the peltries that their craving for liquor and their need of ammunition and other goods demanded. Hence the widening area of human desolation wrought by those scourges of the wilderness, which now had extended from the St. Lawrence to the Ohio and from the Hudson to the Mississippi.

Unless, therefore, these raids could be stopped, La Salle's enterprise in the Illinois country would come to nothing but ruin. He proposed then, to unite the western tribes in a confederacy of defense against the Iroquois and to colonize them all around or near to his Illinois base, which, as we have seen, he intended to make at the Rock. There, with the flag of France over all, he hoped to hold the Iroquois in check and establish both a profitable trading station and a permanent colony of Frenchmen, the outlet of whose activities he would make at the Gulf of Mexico and not on the St. Lawrence.

The issue of recent Indian wars in the east favored him; for near Fort Miami, as he found on his return, there were the huts of twenty to thirty Abenakis and Mohegans, fugitives from Puritan victors in King Philip's War. These readily allied themselves with La Salle, yielding him "the love and admiration he rarely failed to command from this hero-worshiping race,"* and making him their leader. One after another the Shawanoes and Miamis, who also had suffered from the Iroquois, joined the league and attached themselves to La Salle. In March, 1681, then, with La Forest as his lieutenant, he set out for the great town of the Illinois in the hope that the occupants had begun to return to it and could be won over to his plans. On the way thither he encountered a band of Foxes, or Outagamies, of Green Bay, from whom he learned the fate of Tonty and also that Hennepin and Ako had returned from among the Sioux—news that gave him peculiar delight.

At the ruined town he met a band of Illinois, first of the returning fugitives, to whom he gave presents and whom he urged to make peace with the Miamis in the interest of the common defense against the Iroquois. He had sent La Forest to Mackinac to hold Tonty until he could meet him there in person; and having completed his work

* PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.

among the Illinois, he returned to Fort Miami; and later at the Miami village at the St. Joseph portage, he was able to discomfit certain Iroquois spies and cement his league by a formal treaty with the tribes, that left him free to proceed with his great enterprise of finding the mouth of the Mississippi and establishing his colony on the Illinois.

First, it was necessary to go to Canada. At Mackinac he met Father Membré and Tonty, as one might meet those who had returned from the grave; and together all went to La Salle's Fort Frontenac and thence to Montreal. For a third time La Salle had to pacify his creditors and dicker for more credit and supplies, in all of which, with the aid of Barrios, Count Frontenac's secretary, and the support of a wealthy relative, in whose favor La Salle made his will, he was entirely successful. Then with Tonty, Father Membré, about thirty Frenchmen and more than a hundred Indians—Shawanoes, Abenakis and others from New England—he again started for the Illinois, reaching Fort Miami in November, 1681.

A delay here of about a month gave all a needed rest before the great Mississippi quest began. The start was made on December 21, 1681, the entire party consisting of La Salle, Tonty, D'Autray, Father Membré, twenty-three Frenchmen and Indians, with their squaws and children, in all fifty-

four people. On the day named, Tonty and Father Membré, with a portion of the company, set out for Chicago River. La Salle and the others followed a few days later. They found Illinois River closed with ice; and the canoes and luggage were therefore placed on sleds which were drawn over the ice and snow for a hundred miles, or until open water was reached below Peoria Lake. Then all took to the canoes. They entered the Mississippi on February 6, 1682. On April 6 they arrived at the Mississippi delta, where the great river divided itself into three broad channels. The command was then divided into three parties, led respectively by La Salle, Tonty and D'Autray,* all of whom reached the Gulf. Later they united on a spot of dry ground just above the main mouth of the river, where a column was erected bearing the arms of France and the inscription: "Louis Le Grand, Roy de France et de Navarre, règne; le Neuvième Avril, 1682." The Te Deum was chanted; and La Salle in a formal proclamation took possession of the river and all the lands it drained in the name of the King. Then all chanted the grand hymn of the *Vexilla Regis*,—

* As D'Autray's name does not again appear except incidentally in this narrative, it may be said that this "always very faithful and brave" officer settled on lands near the Rock, granted him by La Salle. He served with Tonty in the war of 1687. In the spring of 1688, after escorting a convoy to Fort Frontenac, he was murdered by the Iroquois while returning to his Illinois home.

The banners of Heaven's King advance,
The mystery of the Cross shines forth;—

and when all was over “the realm of France had received on parchment a stupendous accession—all by virtue of a feeble human voice, inaudible at half a mile.”*

La Salle had thus achieved an everlasting name and realized some portion of his magnificent vision of empire. It remained to accomplish the rest.

The return to the Illinois was slow; and when he had again reached what is now known as the Chickasaw Bluffs (Memphis), he became too ill to travel further, and thereupon rested at a fort called Prudhomme, built while descending the river. Tonty was dispatched in advance to Mackinac to send to Canada the news of the issue of the journey, and then to return to the Illinois. La Salle himself was able to reach Fort Miami in August and Mackinac in September.

It had been La Salle's intention to proceed at once to France to bring out a colony to take possession of and to hold the mouth of the Mississippi; but his illness and rumors of a raid into the West by the Iroquois put that plan out of the question for the immediate present; and he turned back to the Illinois, having sent Father Membrè to Europe in his stead to make known his great discovery to

* PARKMAN: “La Salle,” etc.

the King at Paris. Father Membré arrived at Quebec just in time to sail for France on November 17 in the same ship that carried Count Frontenac also back to his native land, the latter having been relieved of the governorship by LeFebvre de la Barre. Of this last and greatest misfortune, the departure of his only official friend in Canada, La Salle at that moment happily knew nothing.

In pursuance of his plans, therefore, La Salle, in December, 1682, with Tonty and his men, went from Fort Miami to the Rock and there entrenched himself, cutting away the forest that covered the top and building a storehouse and dwellings with the timbers, encircling all with a palisade of logs drawn up from the forest below. The stronghold thus made he named Fort St. Louis. And this was the first permanent settlement of the white race made in the Mississippi Valley.*

During the winter La Salle's Indian allies began to gather about the Rock, finding in the commander at Fort St. Louis a refuge and a defense from the Iroquois; and when the spring and summer had come again, the "Rock was indeed like a veritable feudal castle, from which La Salle looked down upon a concourse of wild human life. Lodges of bark and rushes, or cabins of logs, were clustered on the open plain or along the edges of the border-

* MONETTE: "History of the Mississippi Valley."

ing forests. Squaws labored, warriors lounged in the sun, naked children whooped and gamboled on the grass. Beyond the river, a mile, or a little more, on the left, the banks were studded once more with the lodges of the Illinois, who, to the number of six thousand, had returned to their favorite dwelling place. Scattered along the valley, among the adjacent hills, or over the neighboring prairie, were the cantonments of half a score of other tribes, or fragments of tribes, gathered under the protecting ægis of the French: Shawanoes from the Ohio; Abenakis from Maine, Miamis from the sources of the Kankakee, with others whose barbarous names are hardly worth the record. Nor were these La Salle's only dependents. By the terms of his patent he had seigniorial rights over this wild domain; and now he began to grant it out in parcels to his followers."*

At Fort St. Louis La Salle seemed to feel that his long wanderings were at an end.† The seat of his seigniorship would be here; and he had only to surround himself with Frenchmen to realize his dream of seeing them and his Indian friends united in joint agricultural and commercial enterprise. The land itself invited such enterprise. La Salle often spoke of the Illinois as a terrestrial paradise.

* PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.

† MASON: "Chapters of Illinois History," pt. 1.

Tonty, a man of few words and not given to exaggeration, says it was as charming a country as one anywhere might see—"a great plain adorned with trees and abounding in strange fruits." It was a hunter's paradise, alive with bison; deer grazed in great herds, like flocks of sheep; and there were land and water fowl without number. Father Membrè also speaks of the River Seignelay, as he calls the Illinois, as very beautiful and of all the country along the river as charming in its aspect. "And it was with the feeling that they had come to the garden of the earth that La Salle's retainers began their preparations for a feudal establishment within its borders, after the pattern of those of the old world."*

The names of twenty or more of those whom La Salle thus encouraged to make clearings and to plant crops, grantees of his lands in the Illinois, are preserved in the records of the Superior Council of Quebec and are given in part by Mason as follows: Michael Dizy, Riverin, Pierre Chenet, François Pachot, Chanjon, François Hazeur, Louis Le Vasseur, Mathieu Marlin, François Charon, les Sieurs D'Autray, d' Artigny and La Chesnaye, Jacques de Faye, Pierre La Vasseur, Michael Guyon, Poisset, Andréde Chaulne, Marie Joseph le Neuf, Michael de Gréz Philipés Esnault, Jean

* MASON: *Ibid.*

Petit, René Fezeret, the Sieurs Laporte, Louvigny and de St. Castin, Francois de la Forest, Henry de Tonty, and the Jesuit Fathers.

La Salle in a memoir addressed to the Minister of the Marine reports the total number of the Indians around Fort St. Louis at this time at about four thousand warriors, or twenty thousand souls. His diplomacy had been crowned with a marvelous success, due, first, to the Iroquois and the universal terror which they inspired; and next to his own skillful address and unwearied energy.*

* PARKMAN: "La Salle," etc.



TAKING POSSESSION OF LOUISIANA.

[From "Wisconsin" in "Stories of the States,"]

KISMET.

The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous Knights
Whereof this world has record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved.

—Tennyson: "*Morte d'Arthur.*"

FAILURE AND DEATH.

In spite of difficulties and hindrances which to other men would have seemed insurmountable, La Salle had succeeded, and the corner stone of a new empire had been laid. It only remained to rear the superstructure on La Salle's foundation. "His colony had sprung up, however, in a night; might not a night suffice to disperse it?" Its permanence depended, first of all, at this time, upon the good will and co-operation of the government at Quebec. Unfortunately, Frontenac had been recalled and La Barre in Canada "reigned in his stead."

No sooner had La Salle become seated at Fort St. Louis and La Barre at Quebec than La Salle began to realize that he no longer had a real friend in official or commercial Canada; but rather that all was hostile to him and his great purpose. La Barre was hopelessly avaricious, narrow minded and absolutely without capacity as a statesman. He began his administration with enmity in



LA SALLE.

[The above portrait is said by Winsor, "Narrative and Critical History," to be based on an engraving preserved in the library of Rouen, entitled "Cavilli de la Salle Francois," and is the only picture of La Salle, except one, a small vignette, published by Gravier, which shows the face of a slighter man than is here indicated and one of more spiritual cast of countenance than the above.]

thought and deed toward La Salle, whose men sent from the Illinois for supplies and ammunition for the Fort, a government as well as private station, were prevented from returning; whose fur carriers were plundered or encouraged to plunder him; whose supplies were detained in Canada or stolen on the way. In spite of pleadings and protests and devices to win La Barre's good will, La Salle everywhere found impediments placed in his way by that official and by the Jesuit Fathers. At Paris also his discoveries were belittled by La Barre, his acts and motives misrepresented and his character libeled. The governor even went so far as to encourage the Dutch at Albany, in their intrigues with the Iroquois, to renew the war on the Illinois, solely to embarrass La Salle, notwithstanding the evils such a war might bring to Canada. Finally, having cut off the post on the Illinois from all supplies, La Barre even dared to seize La Salle's Fort Frontenac and rob it of its stores which he sold for his own and the official ring's private benefit; and in various other ways La Barre made La Salle's continued occupation of the Illinois difficult to impossible.

Early in the autumn of 1683, therefore, finding his position no longer tenable under the circumstances, La Salle left Tonty in command at Fort St. Louis and started for Quebec to sail for France,

in order to organize a colony which should proceed under his leadership to the mouth of the Mississippi and there make a settlement which should command the outlet of the valley and become the entrepôt of its commerce. Thus La Salle hoped to free himself and the Illinois from their perennial menace, the provincial government at Quebec.

On his way eastward, at a fort he had built at Chicago, La Salle met the Chevalier de Baugis with his escort, who by command of La Barre was then on his way to Fort St. Louis to take command of the post. La Salle was furious; but he controlled his wrath and gave De Baugis letters to Tonty, directing the latter to yield the command gracefully but to remain as his agent in charge of his personal effects and representative of his interests at the Rock.

It was on September 1, 1683, only a few days after receiving La Barre's order to surrender his Fort to De Baugis, that La Salle, while resting at his Chicago station, wrote the letter to Antoine Brossard,* which proved to be his farewell message to his faithful friends at the Rock, and which is paraphrased in translation by Mason as follows:†

* Brossard was a member of La Salle's Mississippi expedition. The letter, Mason says, was preserved by Brossard and his descendants until in 1895, when it came to sale at Montreal, it was purchased by him as Secretary of the Chicago Historical Society, in whose keeping it now is.

† MASON: "Land of the Illinois."

“Beginning with an expression of gratitude to his people at the Rock for their fidelity, he promises to reward them therefor as soon as he shall have scattered the little storm, as he hopes to do. He tells them that Rolland* is awaiting him at Missilimackinac with a good cargo, and that he is taking there with him La Fontaine, La Violette, the Sieur d’ Autray and the two Shawanoes whom he will send back to bring them some of it. He assures them that from the King, who is the greatest and most just prince of the universe, they have cause to expect only the recompense due to the courage they have shown in the discovery and the making of the post, and urges them to work, since the gain of their own cause and his depends on their establishment. They should therefore all settle themselves on large clearings, and if there remains anything to be done at the Fort, they should work at it as at a thing for their true interests. He proposes to return by sea in the spring, and they will have merchandise and all their requirements, and even something to drink his health with, as Rolland has saved him a barrel of whisky. They must be united and follow Tonty’s counsel and orders. And one thing of great consequence is to gather as many buffalo skins as possible, for which Boisrondet (his commissary at the

* A noted trader and voyageur.



The Murder of Mons.^r de La Salle
en. Van der Gucht, del.

[This picture is a reproduction (from WINSOR: "Narrative and Critical History of America") of a reproduction in Margry's "Mémoires," etc., of an old copper plate published a few years after La Salle's death. It was by Van der Gucht, and appears in the London edition (1698) of Hennepin's "New Discovery." The face of La Salle, enlarged, is that painted by Healey and reproduced on p. 40.]

Fort) will give for the larger two beaver skins and for the smaller, one. They must always speak with great respect of the governor, and obey his orders, even if he were to command them to abandon the Fort, and do nothing that looks like plotting and combining.”

As always at the court of Louis, La Salle in Paris was again successful in overthrowing his enemies. The time was propitious. Louis's relations with Spain made La Salle's proposition to seize the mouth of the Mississippi a welcome one; and he obtained all he asked for. La Barre was rebuked and La Forest, then in France, was sent back as La Salle's agent to reoccupy both Fort Frontenac and Fort St. Louis and to take charge of all his properties, which La Barre was directed to restore to their owner. Finally in 1684, with about one hundred and seventy-five colonists, in four ships, La Salle sailed from Rochelle for the Mississippi.

Unfortunately, the command while at sea was given to the naval officer, Beaujeu; there was friction among the leaders, for which both were responsible; and all went wrong. A storm drove them to a haven far to the west of their destination, the mouth of the great river, and it was necessary to make a landing on the shore of the present state of Texas, where an attempt was made

to found a settlement. What follows is a tale of miserable disappointment, acute suffering, foul treachery, abject failure, death. While making search for the lost Mississippi, La Salle was murdered by his own men when on Trinity River, Texas, on March 19, 1687. Certain malcontents first killed La Salle's nephew, then his faithful Shawnoe hunter, and his servant, and finally they slew La Salle also, from an ambushade. The body was dragged naked among the bushes and there abandoned to the wild beasts, its burial by his brother, the Abbé Cavelier, being forbidden by the murderers. Thus in the vigor of his manhood, at the age of forty-three, died Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle; and the heroic age of Canada came to an end. "Behold," says Tonty, closing his brief account of this disaster, "behold the fate of one of the greatest men of the age; of wonderful ability, and capable of accomplishing any enterprise."

As for the colonists, many of them, including the excellent Father Membre, counted always, with Tonty, La Forest and Boisrondet, as one of the most faithful and trusted of all La Salle's companions, were massacred by the Indians; some others escaped with the fleet to France; a few were captured and treated as prisoners of war by the Spaniards; while Abbé Cavelier, La Salle's brother, Douay and Joutel, commander of the soldiers attached to the colony, as we shall see, reached the Rock and finally were able to return to France.

LA SALLE.

I hear the tread of pioneers
Of nations yet to be;
The first low wash of waves where soon
Shall roll a human sea.

—Whittier.

HIS DREAM OF EMPIRE.

It has been the fashion in certain quarters to belittle the character and accomplishments of La Salle. While Parkman makes him second only to Champlain as the greatest of all French discoverers of the great West, Dr. Shea treats him as simply a follower of trails that others had previously blazed. Parkman bears testimony to the heroic persistence of the man in spite of immense physical and financial difficulties and the more disheartening machinations of enemies, whose adverse influence was felt at every step of his career, from the court of Louis XIV. to his grave in Texas. Dr. Shea, on the other hand, ascribes his failure to a fatal lack of capacity as an explorer. "La Salle was doubtless a persuasive talker in setting forth his projects," he says, "though utterly incapable of carrying out even the simplest."

There is a small element of truth in the latter view of La Salle, but the statement is an exaggeration.



ROBERT CAVELIER SIEUR DE LA SALLE.

[Louis Hennepin's "Nouvelle Decouverte," London Edition of 1688. The picture is interesting, but as a portrait it has absolutely no value.]

tion of La Salle's real fault. It is true that La Salle, strictly speaking, discovered nothing except the Ohio River—neither the Mississippi nor its outlet, both of which had been seen by the Spaniards more than a hundred years before he was born; but these discoveries the Spaniard had long since forgotten, and La Salle's claim of the interior of the continent for France by right of his discovery of the Ohio and of the mouth of the Mississippi and by his occupation thereof was never disputed. As to the Northwest, though La Salle was not the first to explore its lakes and rivers, he certainly was the first to enter it as a settler and as the pioneer of those who here have made a great state.

Mr. Moses* goes even further than Shea, attributing to La Salle a bickering spirit, which certainly is not a characteristic of the man as he is pictured by Parkman, confessedly the most competent historian of this period and department of our American history. Moses says: "Had the French governor [La Barre, La Salle's enemy at all times] and La Salle pooled their issues, and instead of endeavoring to break each other down worked together, there was nothing to prevent their building up a colony at Fort St. Louis [Starved Rock], which would have been of great advantage to the interests of each, and exerted a controlling influ-

* JOHN MOSES: "History of Illinois."

ence upon the destiny of New France. Had agriculture and permanent settlement been encouraged in connection with the traffic with the Indians, a prosperous and powerful community might have been established, which, growing and extending to other equally favorable localities in the Illinois country, might in fifty years have constituted a community which would have proved an insuperable barrier against any foreign encroachment, in consequence of its ability to maintain its own integrity. But the rapacity of one and the ambition of the other prevented the accomplishment of such a result."

Mr. Moses has overlooked the fact that this very idea was, in truth, the keynote of La Salle's career; that is, to take possession of and settle the Mississippi Valley; but in this purpose he had the jealous and mercenary opposition of La Barre, the governor, and also of the Jesuits, neither of whom then desired permanent settlers about them to interfere with their respective relations with the Indians. The responsibility for the failure of La Salle's attempts to colonize the Illinois rests much more with the court and the priesthood on the St. Lawrence than with La Salle on the Illinois. His failures, as the result of his own faults, must be attributed, not so much to the withering influences of a soul consumed with petty quarrels and a bick-

ering spirit, but rather to his unfortunate inability to create real friendships among his own people, and to his besetting sin of trusting to no one but himself for the execution of the simplest tasks, even of projects requiring for their success the co-operation of large bodies of men.

“It is easy to reckon up his defects, but it is not easy to hide from sight the Roman virtues that redeemed them,” writes Parkman. “Beset by a throng of enemies, he stands, like the King of Israel, head and shoulders above them all. He was a tower of adamant, against whose impregnable front hardship and danger, the rage of man and of the elements, the southern sun, the northern blast, fatigue, famine and disease, delay, disappointment and deferred hope emptied their quivers in vain. That very pride, which Coriolanus like, declared itself most sternly in the thickest press of foes, has in it something to challenge admiration. Never, under the impenetrable mail of paladin or crusader, beat a heart of more intrepid metal than within the stoic panoply that armed the breast of La Salle. To estimate aright the marvels of his patient fortitude one must follow his track through the vast scene of his interminable journeyings, those thousands of weary miles of forest, marsh and river, where again and again, in the bitterness of baffled striving, the untiring pil-

grim pushed onward toward the goal which he never was to attain.”*

More than two hundred years have passed since La Salle perished in the trackless waste of the far Southwest, and his venturesome soul fled to that “bourne from which no traveler returns”; but even as he stood upon the summit of Starved Rock in 1683, and his eye swept over the magnificent landscape, his prophetic spirit saw in the then distant future the grandeur of the empire that was yet to come, whose very heart would throb in the fertile lands spread out before him, which he loved to characterize as “a terrestrial paradise.” It was the master mind of La Salle that first conceived the policy which led on, step by step, from Starved Rock “to Fort Duquesne, Braddock’s defeat and Forbes’s march to the Forks of the Ohio” and the train of events culminating in the fall of Quebec.† Looking into the future, La Salle saw on these prairies and upon the shores of the Great Lakes a New France far more powerful than the old; and this vision was the guiding star of his romantic career. As the first white man to establish a settlement upon her soil, he has been justly styled “the Father of Illinois”; but it was only when Wolfe triumphed on the Heights of Abraham that the

* PARKMAN: “La Salle,” etc.

† HINSDALE: “The Old Northwest.”

empire which La Salle foresaw and devoted his life to found became possible. What La Salle did not see nor imagine was that the inexorable law of political evolution had destined that this great power would be not Norman but Anglo-Saxon.

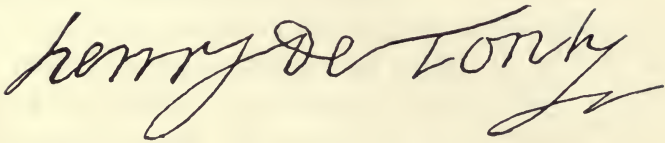


PATH LEADING TO THE TOP OF STARVED ROCK.

TONTY.

His step is firm, his eye is keen,
Nor years in brawl and battle spent,
Nor toil, nor wounds, nor pain have bent
The lordly frame of old Castin.

—Scott.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Henry de Tonty". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background. The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent flourish at the end of the word "Tonty".

Henry de Tonty, a veteran of the Sicilian wars,* whom La Salle met in Paris in 1678 and brought to America, is one of the most superb figures in the annals of the exploration of the Mississippi Valley. His industry and energy, his bravery and his tact, his integrity and his faithfulness, his honorable character and amiable disposition, unite to

* Tonty was the son of Lorenzo Tonty, a banker at Naples, Italy. In his petition addressed to the Count de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine, in 1690 [1691?], Tonty said that he entered the military service of France as a cadet in 1668-1669; served four years as a midshipman at Marseilles and Toulon, making four campaigns on ships of war and three in galleys; was made captain at Messina, and in the interval was lieutenant of horse; had his right hand shot away by a grenade at Libisso; was taken prisoner and conducted to Metasse, where he was held for six months and then exchanged for the governor's son; after a visit to France he returned to Sicily, as a volunteer in the galleys; and when the troops were discharged, having no other occupation, he joined La Salle, 1678.

differentiate him from all those whose names as the lesser stars crowd the pages of those early annals. Parkman calls him, "That brave, loyal and generous man, always vigilant and always active, beloved and feared alike by white man and by red." Mrs. Catherwood† says: "La Salle is a definite figure in the popular mind. But La Salle's greater friend is known only to historians and students. To me the finest fact in the Norman explorer's career is the devotion he commanded in Henry de Tonty. No stupid dreamer, no ruffian at heart, no betrayer of friendships, no mere blundering woodsman—as La Salle has been outlined by his enemies—could have bound to himself such a man as Tonty. The love of this friend, and the words this friend has left on record, thus honor La Salle. And we who like courage and steadfastness and gentle courtesy in man owe much honor which has never been paid to Henry de Tonty."

When La Salle left the Rock for France in August, 1683, he placed Tonty in command. The situation was desperate in the extreme. There were but about twenty white men at the Fort, and for these there was but little ammunition—scarcely a hundred pounds of powder, and proportionately as little lead, with which to do the hunting and to protect the Rock against the Iroquois who might

† MRS. MARY HARTWELL CATHERWOOD: "The Story of Tonty."

be expected at any time to attack the Fort; nor in the events of the immediate past was there hope or expectation of obtaining further supplies until La Salle himself should return; and La Salle, as we have seen, was a few days later deprived of his command by De Baugis, whose appearance at the Rock confirmed Tonty's worst suspicions of La Salle's disfavor at Quebec.

At Fort St. Louis, under the divided authority of De Baugis and Tonty, the winter following La Salle's departure was passed amid much quarreling, not the less bitter and continuous that De Baugis and his immediate superior, Durantaye, who came down from Mackinac, made it a part of their duty to detach as far as possible La Salle's men and his Indian allies from their allegiance to him and to render them discontented. In the spring there were again rumors of a coming raid by the Iroquois who were, in fact, encouraged in their outrages by the undisguised hostility of La Barre toward La Salle and all those associated with him. During the previous winter La Barre's privately outfitted traders and trappers had invaded La Salle's grant, and both these men and the Iroquois felt they had free hands to rob whomsoever of La Salle's men or allies they should find. It was, then, with a sort of "poetic justice," that early in that same spring, a party of fourteen

Frenchmen who had been outfitted by La Barre and were led by René Le Gardeur, who had spent the winter on the Kankakee hunting under the protection of La Barre's permits, were robbed by a party of raiding Iroquois on the Illinois.* The Indians, indeed, treated La Barre's permits and his letters to Durantaye and De Baugis with insulting contempt, and left the Frenchmen in so desperate a strait that they would probably have died of starvation but for the friendly offices of certain Mascoutins who guided them to the Green Bay mission.

It was from this party of La Barre's partisans that the scouting Iroquois learned that La Salle had been supplanted at Fort St. Louis and was no longer in the West. Thereupon the Iroquois organized an immediate attack on the little garrison. Rumors of the approaching foray coming to the ears of De Baugis and Tonty, De Baugis sent at once to Durantaye at Mackinac for aid and ammunition for the defense, of which they long had had need; but the day after the departure of the messenger the Iroquois appeared (March 20, 1684) and at once attacked the Fort and the allies. They sent a hail of bullets at the palisades by day and by night and even attempted the impossible—an assault; but after six days' fighting they were re-

* The furs stolen are said to have been worth 16,000 francs (livres).

pulsed and withdrew. The Illinois and allied tribes then pursued vigorously. The prisoners taken by the Iroquois were enabled to escape; while the pursuers returned to the Rock in triumph with many Iroquois scalps.

Two months later (May 21, 1684) Durantaye came to the Rock with sixty Frenchmen, including Father Allouez, who was always to be found among the Illinois or their neighbors when La Salle was not. Ostensibly Durantaye had come from Mackinac to assist in the defense against the Iroquois; but in fact his purpose was to send Tonty away. He brought La Barre's order to Tonty to retire from the Rock, and Durantaye was prepared to enforce this order by physical means, if need be. Tonty, however, made no resistance; and later in the same month, having turned over La Salle's property to the faithful Boisrondet, he left the Rock to go alone to Montreal and Quebec, reaching the latter place in August, after an absence of some six years. Here he learned that La Barre had seized Fort Frontenac also and had ousted La Salle's agent La Forest, who also had returned to France, after having rejected with scorn La Barre's proposal that he should remain in charge at Frontenac as a partner in the plunder of La Salle.

La Salle, as we have seen, carried all before him

at Paris and the court. La Barre was rebuked and directed to make complete reparation and immediate restoration of all the properties of which La Salle had been deprived and to deliver the same to La Forest who would return to Canada by the express command of the King to receive them. The King further issued to La Salle a commission making him commandant of the whole region from Fort St. Louis on the Illinois to "New Biscay" (northern Mexico); and in a personal letter to La Barre the King directed that he should "do nothing adverse to the interests of La Salle whom he had taken under his particular protection."

When La Forest reached Quebec in September, 1684, La Barre was still further humiliated by the knowledge that he had brought to Tonty the King's commission as captain of foot in the French army, as well as a royal order to La Barre to surrender Fort Frontenac to La Forest and Fort St. Louis (the Rock) to Tonty who was named as its governor. La Forest went at once to Frontenac, but Tonty was held at Montreal by the winter. In the following spring (1685), with an outfit valued at twenty thousand livres, he started for the Rock, which he reached in June; and there can be little doubt that he took peculiar pleasure in giving De Baugis his dismissal. In his receipt (dated June

26, 1685) to DeBaugis for the command, he describes himself as "first seigneur of the Isle of Tonty, captain of a company detached from the marine, sub-delegate of Monsieur de Meulle, Intendant of New France, to the country of the Ottawas and other nations, and governor of Fort St. Louis."*

Tonty's first duty was to restore harmony among his Indian allies. During De Baugis' administration, while Tonty was absent, the Miamis and Illinois had quarreled, the breach being so serious that the Miamis had made a fierce attack on the Illinois. It cost Tonty many presents and much patient negotiation to restore the peace that was so necessary to the defense of the Rock against the Iroquois.

It was fall before good feeling was restored. Then Tonty was again alarmed by rumors of disaster to La Salle, that began to fill the wilderness. These stories, which, by ways that are not much understood by us, had traveled, as did all news through the wilderness in those days, with wonderful rapidity and singular general accuracy, became so insistent that Tonty determined to go to Mackinac for information. There, at that great clearing-house of wilderness, his fears were to some degree heightened by what he heard, know-

* MASON: "Land of the Illinois."

ing as he did that La Salle had sailed for the mouth of the Mississippi. On the other hand, Tonty learned there with deep satisfaction, no doubt, that La Barre had been dismissed in disgrace and that the Marquis de Denonville had, on August 13, 1685, succeeded him as governor of Canada. He was also told that the trader Rolland had brought word for Tonty to proceed to Montreal to consult with the governor upon the conduct of a projected expedition against the Iroquois. Tonty, however, felt it his first duty to find and, if need be, relieve La Salle. Therefore, on November 30, he left Mackinac in a canoe for the Rock, which after much suffering, relieved in a measure by the Jesuits at Chicago, he reached in January, 1686. Before proceeding further he sought and found Rolland, from whom he had assurances of Denonville's good will toward the Illinois establishment; and the knowledge of this fact did much to restore confidence and bring content to the colonists about the Rock, as well as to leave the way open to Tonty to take up the quest for La Salle.

In February, then, nothing further having been heard of La Salle, Tonty determined to go to the Gulf in search of him. La Forest came west from Fort Frontenac to take command at Fort St. Louis during Tonty's absence, and on February

16, with twenty-five Frenchmen* and four Shawanoes, Tonty set out from the Rock for the lower Mississippi. In Holy Week, just three years to a day from that one on which La Salle in 1683 had set up the royal arms and pronounced his proclamation of occupation, Tonty and his party were at the mouth of the Mississippi. But there was no sign of La Salle. They searched the country on either bank for many miles without obtaining any information, and then reluctantly Tonty turned his face homeward. At an Indian village near where they re-erected the royal arms, Tonty gave to a chief a letter to La Salle, in the event of a meeting, which the Indian preserved faithfully for fourteen years and then delivered to D'Iberville who then ascended the river to take up the task of working out the colonial policy that La Salle had conceived and had died to inaugurate.

At the mouth of the Arkansas, where La Salle had granted a seigniory to Tonty, ten of the latter's men now elected to settle; and Tonty gave them the lands they wished and built them a house surrounded with a palisade.† On June 24, the

* In this party were the surgeon Jean Michel, who had been with La Salle to the Gulf, and René Cuillerier, a famous name at Montreal, an ancestor of the Chicago Beaubiens.

† Douay says (LE CLERO: "First Establishment of the Faith in New France") that Couture "told us the Sieur de Tonty had stationed them there to serve as an intermediate station to aid the Sieur de la Salle and to maintain an alliance with the tribes and to shield them against attacks by the Iroquois."

remainder of the party reached the Rock, all glad enough to take a long rest.

Tonty was the sole exception. Having persuaded two Illinois chiefs to go with him, he proceeded at once to answer the summons of Denonville sent through Rolland to meet him at Montreal, which place Tonty reached at the end of July—a month of strenuous paddling, indeed. The conference concluded, Tonty and the Illinois returned at once, and beached their canoes at the base of the Rock early in December—making for Tonty a record of canoe traveling for the ten months of about five thousand miles.

Denonville was a different type of governor from La Barre. At least, he appreciated the political and economic conditions menacing the French interests in Canada from the direction of Albany, daily growing more serious. The activity of the English in the Mohawk Valley and especially their ambitious incursions into the heart of the fur country, making necessary the placing by Du Lhut of a fort at the outlet of Lake Huron into St. Clair River, had aroused Denonville to defensive activity. In 1686 the English traders, already established on Hudson Bay, menaced from New York even Mackinac and French communications with the Upper Country and might have proved formidable but for the activity of Du Lhut, who stopped

and turned back one considerable party who had all but escaped his keen vigilance. In Dongan, too, governor of New York, a man who understood La Salle's plans fully and knew the need of a prompt counter movement, Denonville found a rival well worth his attention, as the spirited correspondence between them amply attests. If France and England were then at peace, as it so happened, for King William's War did not begin until 1689, there were still the common disturbances of the frontier to offer a pretext; and as the Iroquois were "English Indians," a stroke at the English might be made over the shoulders of the Iroquois. So, very early in his administration, as we have seen, Denonville had planned a punitive expedition against the Iroquois, whose arrogance, since the shameful peace made with them by La Barre, when he abandoned the Illinois and Fort St. Louis to their fury, had made the Five Nations a constant menace to the settlements on the St. Lawrence also. The summer of 1686 was, therefore, spent in mobilizing an army from the forts to take the field the following year; and he had called for aid upon all the western posts: Dorvilliers, La Forest's successor at Frontenac; De Lhut at Fort St. Joseph at the foot of Lake Huron; Durantaye at Mackinac, and La Forest at the Rock, as well as from the colonies on the St. Lawrence. Denonville in

writing La Forest at the Rock on June 6, 1686, asking for aid in the coming campaign, suggested that if Tonty should return from the lower Mississippi, which he doubted would be the case, he should command the contingent from Fort St. Louis, otherwise La Forest himself should undertake that duty. Tonty, as we have seen, not only did return, but was able the same fall to meet Denonville in Montreal and give him valuable advice relative to the conduct of the expedition.

On his return to the Rock in December, Tonty sent out runners to the western tribes, inviting them to join in the campaign the following spring. Accordingly the Indians assembled near the Rock in April, 1687. Tonty welcomed and entertained them most satisfactorily with a dog feast, a function which Sabastien Rale, the missionary, in a letter* to his nephew says, "passes among the Indians for a most magnificent festival, and is therefore called the Feast of the Chiefs." La Forest had already departed from the Rock with thirty Frenchmen in canoes, agreeing to meet Tonty on the upper St. Clair River; and on April 17, Tonty followed on foot, overland, with sixteen Frenchmen and one hundred and forty-nine Illinois warriors, the Rock with twenty men having been left in the command of Sieur de Bellefontaine.

* KIP: "The Early Jesuit Missions in North America."

Denonville began his campaign in 1687 by a tremendous blunder, having in June treacherously seized at Fort Frontenac certain Iroquois whom he had himself invited there on the pretext of a friendly conference. That base act concluded, he assembled his various detachments of soldiers, voyageurs and Indian allies on July 10 at Irondequoit on Lake Ontario—two thousand fighting men all told—and took the command in person. On July 12, he proceeded to the Seneca villages where a sharp engagement took place, in which the skill in Indian warfare and the bravery of the men of the West under Tonty, La Forest, Durantaye* and Du Lhut, saved the day. The Iroquois were routed and severely chastised and their villages burned and crops destroyed. The western commanders all were rewarded, Tonty and La Forest being recommended to the home government for the rewards due their prowess and valuable services; and the Iroquois never afterwards successfully raided the Illinois.

After the battle Tonty and Du Lhut and their men started for the West in canoes, while the Indians returned across the country, bearing the

* With this mention Durantaye disappears from this narrative. He was born at Nantes in 1641; came to Canada with his regiment; retired from Mackinac (1683-89) and aided in Frontenac's War. He was esteemed the best soldier of his time in the colony. He died in 1717, leaving descendants who still live in Canada.

scalps of the slain. At Du Lhut's Fort St. Joseph, at the foot of Lake Huron, Tonty met Father Gravier, the missionary to the Illinois, with whom he proceeded *via* Mackinac to the Rock which they reached on October 27.

Here on ascending the Rock Tonty met a remarkable group of strangers, being none other than the Abbé Cavelier, La Salle's older brother; young Cavelier, his nephew; Father Anastase Douay, a Récollet friar; Teissier, a marine; and a faithful officer of La Salle's soldiery in Louisiana, named Henri de Joutel, the chronicler of La Salle's fatal voyage and his death—the remnants of the colony of men, women and children who sailed with La Salle from Rochelle on July 24, 1684. They had made their way, after La Salle's murder, across Texas and Arkansas to the mouth of the Arkansas River where they fortunately met Sieurs Couture and De Launay who, with the Indians of the neighborhood, gave them a welcome and shelter in La Salle's name, and, who when their guests had recovered their strength, sent them forward to the Rock, where they arrived in the early afternoon of Sunday, September 14, 1687. The Shawanoe runner Tupin, who had met them at Lake Peoria and understood that La Salle himself was in the party, had already announced their coming; and "drawing near, we were met by some Indians

that were on the bank, who," says Joutel, "having viewed us well, and understanding that we came from La Salle, and that we belonged to him, ran to the Fort to carry the news; and immediately we saw a Frenchman come out with a company of Indians who fired a volley of several pieces to welcome us."

Upon landing the travelers were at once asked where La Salle was; but as the Abbé Cavelier feared he might lose the advantage of his relationship to La Salle if his death were known, they had previously determined to conceal the fact of his death until they had arrived again in France. "We told them," continues Joutel, "that he had brought us part of the way, etc., and that he was then in good health. All that was true enough; for M. Cavelier and I, who thus spoke, were not present at La Salle's death. It is no less true that Father Anastasius [Douay] and he they call Teisier could have given a better account, the one as an eye-witness and the other as one of the murderers [accessory before the fact], and they were both with us." Accepting Abbé Cavelier's word as the whole truth, Bellefontaine, Tonty's lieutenant in command, gave them hearty welcome and conducted them to the chapel within the Fort, where a Te Deum was sung in thanksgiving. "All this while," says Joutel, "the natives came by inter-

vals to fire their pieces to express their joy for our return and for the news we brought of M. de La Salle, which refreshed our sorrow for his misfortune, perceiving that his presence would have settled all things advantageously." They saw, too, that if they had at once told the truth here was spirit enough to have rescued the unfortunate people they had left behind them; but they learned the value of truth, as many others also do, when it was too late—their lie had closed their mouths and many needlessly suffered.

The Abbé's party desired to move on as soon as possible for Quebec, and Boisrondet furnished them with a canoe for the purpose. They gathered provisions for the journey and took furs to trade at Mackinac; and thus provisioned they set out, in the company of three voyageurs who had stopped at the Rock on their way to Mackinac; but encountering only foul weather, they were unable to navigate the lake and so they cached their goods at Chicago and returned to the Rock to spend the winter. Joutel expresses regret at this necessity because it would by so much delay the succors they had intended to send "to those French of our own company whom we had left on the coast of the Bay of Mexico."

Thus it was that Tonty was able to meet them in October and to act as their host during the

winter; and the leisure Joutel thereafter enjoyed gave him opportunity to make notes of his observations on the Rock and the French residing there. "Fort Louis," he says, "is only fortified with stakes and palisades, and some houses advancing to the edge of the Rock. It has a very spacious esplanade, or place of arms. The place is naturally strong, and might be made so by art with very little expense. Several of the natives live in it in their huts. I cannot give an account of the latitude it stands in, but nothing can be pleasanter." He is very enthusiastic about the hunting, the beauty of the scenery, the temperate climate, the abundance of timber, of fruits and nuts and grass and building materials and coal, the fertility of the soil. "Whatever is sown grows there, whether herbs, roots, Indian and even European corn [wheat], as has been tried by M. Boisrondet, who sowed all sorts, and had a bountiful crop, and we ate of the bread, which was very good."

To Tonty the same miserable subterfuges about La Salle were rehearsed, and he repeated the welcome his lieutenant had already extended. And the Fort's population prepared for the winter.

Tonty had brought with him to the Rock several Frenchmen, among whom was one of his cousins, Greysolon de la Tourette, a younger brother of Du Lhut; and later in the autumn La Forest

again came to the Fort to pass the winter. Still later, toward the end of December, two men in charge of the carriers who were bringing ammunition and supplies from Montreal arrived and reported that they were unable to get further with their goods than La Salle's fort at Chicago; whereupon Tonty sent the Chief of the Shawanoes with thirty of his people to bring the merchandise to the Rock, which they did. One of these Frenchmen was Sieur Juchereau de Saint Denis, then second in command at Mackinac, whom Tonty had invited to visit him in order to enjoy the hunting in a milder climate than Mackinac can boast; and if one may believe the chroniclers of those days and the stories of the later English settlers who succeeded the French in the occupancy of these same lands, so abundant was the game that many a merry group of hunters might have been seen after a day on the frozen river bringing back the light sledges well laden with deer and turkeys and other spoils of the chase. "Of our living," says Joutel, "there was no complaint to make, except that we had nothing but water to drink."

The winter passed pleasantly enough, with hunting by day, and snug nights around the cabin fires of the Fort. There was the trading also to be attended to; for Indians were all about them in

their villages and the Rock was the central fortification and trading headquarters for the tribes whom Franquelin locates on his map of La Salle's colony of 1683. There was some shifting always of Indian populations, of course; but the Indians of the Rock colony in 1687 were substantially the same as in 1683. The Miamis were located on Buffalo Rock, to the east two or three miles; others of the same tribe were at Chicago; others were at St. Joseph, and still others at Maramech, in northeastern Illinois as Franquelin locates it. J. F. Steward* locates the site of this once somewhat noted village on Fox River near Plano in Kendall county. Then there were the allied tribes of Mascoutins and Kickapoos on Rock River, who traded at the Rock or at Maramech with other tribes there who came to the Rock or met traders from the Rock. The great east-and-west trail, says Steward, crossed the Fox River at Maramech, while that village existed; and there it crossed also the Kishwaukee trail, from the swamps of the northwest, over which were brought the furs most sought for by the traders. "Although I have found but little authority for other than the river courses," says Steward, "I believe that not all the French goods were brought up the Fox River to Maramech and the other towns along the Fox Riv-

* STEWARD: "Lost Maramech and Earliest Chicago."

er. Many were brought from Fort St. Louis that from its establishment by La Salle to about 1700 was an entrepôt: but much was carried from the lake near where is now Racine, to the little lakes where starts the Fox River.”

At Maramech, undoubtedly several trails met then as they did later. Over them moved the roving tribes and bands of white and half-breed hunters; and the branch of the Miamis that were at the village and the traders lodged there received from the French posts the goods they needed. From the Rock the Maramech trail ran along the north side of Illinios River over the great prairie, or to the mouth of Fox River and then along the west bank of that stream, meeting at Maramech the trail to La Salle's fort at Chicago; and it is possible that when Tonty's faithful Shawanoes returned from Chicago, that cold January, heavily burdened with the ammunition and merchandise that had made three canoe loads on the lakes, they may have followed the trail to Maramech, on reaching which they could enjoy the hospitality of their Miami friends for a brief rest to break the killing fatigue of such a task of carrying in mid-winter.

Though the snow lay thick that winter over the land of the Illinois, and the frost held the rivers in its grip, “there was occasional excitement, moreover, at the departure and return of savage

war parties which kept up the contest with the Iroquois. In the month of January (1688) alone the Abbé Cavelier saw thirteen such expeditions of Illinois Indians set out from Fort St. Louis, two of forty and eleven of twenty warriors each, or three hundred in all. The Miamis put in the field one band of eighty and several smaller ones, while the Shawanoes sent several, numbering one hundred and fifty in all. At least one of the Illinois parties returned to the Fort with Iroquois prisoners, of whom six were made slaves and six were burned at the stake. During that winter and spring the Illinois furnished tangible proofs, presumably scalps, that they had put to death two hundred and forty persons among the Iroquois in their own land.* Tonty relates that the Five Nations attempted to make reprisals, but were valiantly withstood by the Illinois who had greatly improved in the art of war under French guidance, and who so harried the Senecas that this tribe was obliged to remain in its villages all winter and refrain from raids upon the Canadian settlements. Furthermore, he says, "Our Illinois have captured and brought to Fort St. Louis eighty Iroquois slaves." And he adds, with a ferocious exultation for which his time and situation were responsible, "we have made a good broiling of them."

* MARGRY: Mason's paraphrase in "Land of the Illinois."

One might dwell longer upon the life at the Rock during this winter of 1687-88, for it was the most comfortable and relaxing resting time the indefatigable Tonty had enjoyed in many years. Here among his friends, gentlemen of his own country and class, his apprehensions as to La Salle set at rest by the equivocations of the Abbé Cavelier and his companions, assured of the protection and cooperation of a colonial government to which he had just rendered a signal service, with his savage allies at peace among themselves and devoted to his service, and the trading post piling up riches in peltry held in trust against his patron's return to the Rock to claim his own, Tonty had every reason to be at his ease and to rest in the confidence that La Salle's plans, political and commercial, with which he was in full sympathy, were upon the eve of their consummation.

And so the winter passed, agreeably enough to all who were at the Rock, then at the very height of its prestige, its power and its material prosperity. The unscrupulous Abbé was no doubt an exception to the general content that everywhere surrounded him. Although the Abbé had not hesitated to tell Couture and De Launay on the Arkansas of La Salle's fate, when the fugitives came to the Rock and met Tonty face to face, "that brave gentleman who was always inseparably attached

to the interest of the *Sieur de la Salle*," they concealed the facts, "it being our duty," adds *Douay*,* "to give the first news to the court." Very naturally the *Abbé* dreaded the possibility that *Couture* and *De Launay* might come to the *Rock* and expose his duplicity and bring upon himself and his party the wrath and well deserved contempt of their generous host.

The *Abbé*, therefore, prepared to leave the *Rock* at the first sign of spring; and when *March 31* came, having obtained from *Tonty* on *La Salle's* account the necessary funds for the journey to *France* and 2,652 *livres* (*francs*) in payment of *La Salle's* debt to his brother, the *Abbé* with the little party started from the *Rock* for *Quebec* and *France*, accompanied by *Boisrondet*, one of the most faithful of *La Salle's* men, who after many years in the wilderness was going home to a well earned and well deserved rest. They took with them five *Indians*,—one from a *Missouri* tribe, "who had learned to speak *French* and had been baptised," says *Joutel*, "but was no better *Christian* for all that." After many adventures by the way, the entire party landed safely at *Rochelle* on *October 9, 1688*. *Boisrondet* went to his native village of *Orleans*, taking the young *Indian* convert with him; *Joutel* and two *Illinois* remained at *Rouen*,

*LE CLERQ: "First Establishment of the Faith in New France."

while Douay, the Abbé and two Indians went to Paris and made their report—too late to save a single soul alive of the Texas colony, had the government been disposed to attempt the succor of the unfortunates, which it was not. The Indians were eventually returned to Canada.

It was not until the following September (1688) that Tonty learned the truth concerning La Salle, when Couture came to the Rock from the Arkansas. We may imagine Tonty's wrath and indignation, and also his deep regret that he could not have gone, a year before, to the rescue of the unhappy colony. It might not be too late, even now, he thought; and to think was to act. He started Couture for Montreal to obtain Denonville's permission to attempt the rescue; but unfortunately an accident compelled Couture to return to the Rock with his mission unexecuted. Tonty had, however, in the meantime received word from Denonville that there was peace with the Iroquois and war with Spain. This news left Tonty free to act on his own account. He had already sent De la Tourette in advance as hunter to provision the expedition; but when La Forest did not appear to take command at the Rock during his absence, Tonty made De la Tourette, "an intelligent lad," commander; while he himself with five Frenchmen and a Shawanoe, with other Indians, on December 3,

left the Rock for the Gulf in a pirogue, or canoe made from a log.

The details of this journey need not detain us here; suffice it to say that Tonty accomplished nothing by the quest save that he was able to ease his own conscience with the thought that he had done his utmost to save those, some of whom he might perhaps have saved had the Abbé Cavelier been truthful when he first reached the Rock; but he was able to find his own rest only after sufferings the most intense he had ever experienced; and it was late in the same year (1688) that he was able again to reach the Rock which continued to be his home for the next twelve years.

After the death of La Salle Fort St. Louis—the Rock—continued to be the center of French power and influence in the Mississippi Valley for at least a decade. Tonty remained in command by virtue of the King's order of 1685, and he exercised a wide jurisdiction. When, however, the Company of Foot in which he held his commission as captain (without pay, for he never received any) was disbanded, being without employment as a soldier, he addressed a petition to the Minister, Count de Pontchartrain, reciting his services in the West and asking for a new command. The petition being glowingly endorsed by Count Frontenac, again governor of Canada, who always took thought for

his friends and the men faithful to the government, Tonty, jointly with La Forest, was granted the proprietorship of Fort St. Louis, where they carried on a profitable trade in peltries for some years; La Forest trading at the Chicago post and Tonty at the Rock.

In 1699, when the other forts in the West were ordered abandoned, an exception was made in favor of Fort St. Louis. Tonty and La Forest were permitted to bring from Montreal annually two canoes of goods and twelve men were allowed for maintenance of the Fort. These concessions were as much a matter of state policy as of favor to two faithful servants of the government, however; for Frontenac, at least, expansionist as he was and ever had been, realized better than did the court that the English traders and settlers were crossing the Alleghenies and making permanent homes in the great valleys claimed by the French; and he knew what that meant to the fortunes of New France. As provincial governor he understood fully the scope of La Salle's policy and approved it; but in the face of the complaints of the church of libertinage in the woods and of debauchery at the forts, Frontenac was able only with difficulty to retain garrisons at some of the forts in the West, most important of which, after Mackinac, he estimated Fort St. Louis, which was the sole point

from which to resist the entrance of the English into the West. Tonty also, trained to La Salle's policy and plan of possession, and having the most intimate knowledge of conditions in the West, as well as being himself a trained strategist, saw that the "English peril" to the great valley, already confronting his government, was more real than the court was willing to concede; and it was on his urgent advice to the government that Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d' Iberville; was sent to take possession of the mouth of the Mississippi, which he did just in time; for the English had themselves decided to do this, and their ships, two years later, actually appeared in the Gulf for that purpose.

In 1699 an expedition under Montigny, with St. Cosme* as "black gown" and historian attached, made a journey of political enquiry to the Mississippi. At the Rock in November they obtained the services of Tonty as guide, who went with them as far as the mouth of the Arkansas, impressing them the while, as he did all with whom he came in contact, that no man then knew the country better or as well as he, nor was more "beloved and

* St. Come (Jean Francois Buisson de) with Franchoise Jolliet de Montigny and Antoine Dairon were selected in the autumn of 1698 to open a mission in the west for the Seminary. He was a Canadian, born in February, 1667; ordained at the age of 23. He labored at Cahokia and at Natchez; and while on a voyage down the Mississippi was murdered by Chetimachas late in the year 1702.—65 *Jesuit Relations*, 262.

feared by all the tribes." St. Cosme says of him: "I cannot, Monseigneur [the Bishop of Quebec], express our obligations to him; he guided us as far as the Arkansas, and gave us much pleasure on the way. He facilitated our course through several nations, winning us the friendship of some and intimidating those who from jealousy or desire of plunder had wished to oppose our voyage; he has not only done the duty of a brave man, but also discharged the functions of a zealous missionary. He quieted the minds of our employes in the little vagaries they might have; he supported us by his example in the exercises of devotion which the voyage permitted us to perform, very often approaching the Sacrament."

Tonty returned to Fort St. Louis and to the conduct of his business as a fur trader, but the others went on to the Gulf.

Again in 1700 Father Gravier made and recorded his impressions of a similar journey for a similar purpose. He observed that the Englishmen were already in the Tennessee country, and were trading with the Mohegans and other Indians who had been driven westward by approaching English settlements. He found English guns among all the natives. The Father is not sure there is danger in this, however. "I do not know what our court will decide about the Mississippi, if no silver mines are

found," he says; "for our government does not seek lands to cultivate."*

In spite of these signals of a coming struggle, the court soon after decided upon its course. Frontenac was dead (November 25, 1698), and a new party was in control in New France. The aggressive policy of the great governor and of his brilliant lieutenants, La Salle, Tonty, La Forest, Du Lhut, Perrot, Cadillac, etc., was reversed. Callières, Frontenac's successor, while firm enough as regards the Iroquois, had but a faint grasp of the French problem in America, and so was disposed to abandon rather than to continue activity in the West. His policy was to let the Indians fight their own battles, and by withdrawing the officers from the forts thus compel the Indians to go to Montreal to trade. And yielding to the governor's representations, "the court at Versailles gave orders in conformity thereto; and from all the Upper County,† first, and from Fort St. Louis, last of all, the traders were summoned, congés revoked, and

* La Sueur (Pierre Charles) also, in 1699, found an Englishman at the mouth of the Arkansas, "for even in this closing year of the seventeenth century English rivalry had commenced on the lower Mississippi."—THWAITES: "France in America."

† As to the abandonment of Mackinac and the other advanced posts, Charlevoix (Vol. 4, p. 276, "History of New France," Shea's translation) says he does not know who was responsible for it, but of its un wisdom he says: "The excursions of the Canadians into new countries certainly ruined the commerce of New France, rendered the nation contemptible among all the tribes on the continent, and raised an

officers ordered home." This order came to La Forest at Fort St. Louis in 1702, directing him to return to Canada and Tonty to join D'Iberville on the Mississippi, whither Tonty had already gone (1700) with twenty men.

And thus it was that "Tonty finally passed from the country of the Illinois, where he had been a conspicuous and honorable figure for twenty years and had achieved for himself a name which will outlast the effacing fingers of time."*

The decline of the Rock in commercial importance followed the order to abandon the Fort and was due to the opening made in consequence of it of a new outlet for the furs of the Upper Country by way of the Mississippi (to which Charlevoix referred in note above) and to the closing of the Wisconsin River waterway by the hostile Foxes.

insurmountable obstacle to the progress of religion. Still, the remedies which his majesty sought to apply were utterly impracticable in the actual position of the colony, since it is certain that the English would have seized the advance posts as soon as we evacuated them, and we should thus at once have had all the tribes gathered near the posts by our influence. Now if these tribes were joined to the Iroquois and the English, one single campaign would suffice to expel the French from New France."

* WALLACE: "Illinois and Louisiana Under French Rule."—Tonty died of yellow fever at Mobile in 1704. Tonty may be called the Father of Louisiana, being the first man after La Salle to urge the settlement of the lower Mississippi. It was through him that English control of that part of our country was postponed for over a hundred years, or until the purchase by Jefferson. "France obtained, under Providence, the guardianship of Louisiana, not, as it proved, for its own benefit, but rather as a trustee for the infant nation by which it was one day to be inherited."—BANCROFT: "History of U. S."

The voyageurs had refused to obey the order of Governor Calliers to return to Canada with the officers; and going down the Mississippi they joined the settlers in their new locations—at Cahokia, originally the mission to the Tamaroas, founded by Father Pinet in 1698; at Kaskaskia, founded in 1700; and at the mouth of the Ohio, where in 1702 Juchereau de St. Denis placed a trading post, all of which settlements looked to the new settlements on the Gulf as their entrepôt for supplies and as outlets for their products in exchange. The commercial effect of this change on the current of the trade of the Upper Country was immediately felt in Canada, whose merchants saw a commercial rival rising in the West; but of the political consequences involved the government then had little suspicion.

The Rock remained, however, for many years thereafter the rendezvous of licensed and illicit traders; in fact, it never has been without its white occupants, literally or as trappers abiding in its immediate vicinity, from Marquette's day to this. In 1718 it had again a quasi-official recognition as the authorized home of French traders from Canada, but the old trade of the Rock had gone to the Mississippi permanently; and when in 1721 Charlevoix made the Rock a visit, he found only the ruins of its palisades and rough cabins.

And so for the moment we, too, will abandon the Rock, while waiting for the shifting from the East to the West of the scene of the great drama of the conflict of France and England for the possession of North America, when Starved Rock again becomes the center of interest in the West.



LOOKING FROM STARVED ROCK
EASTWARD.

THE MISSION.

“Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.”

—*Motto: Society of Jesus.*

The bells of the Roman mission
That call from their turrets twain
To the boatman on the river,
To the hunter on the plain.

—*Whittier.*

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

The earlier Catholic missionaries to the Indians of North America were to a degree distinguished for “heroic self-devotion, energy of purpose, purity of motive, holiness of design.” Nowhere can be found “more that is sublime even to eyes blinded by the glare of human greatness” than in the biographies of these martyrs of the American wilderness. Parkman’s volume, “The Jesuits in North America,” is a most dramatic recital of Christian heroism and zeal which has not been surpassed by any age of the church in any clime. The “apostles to the heathen” who sacrificed all things, suffered all things, endured all things, had not all passed from earth until these men, at least, had met death for Christ’s sake and His church.

The missionaries to the West were no less famous than those who immortalized themselves among the

Iroquois and the savages of Maine. They were "among the best and purest of their order, burning with zeal for the salvation of souls and the gaining of an immortal crown," and they "toiled and suffered with self-sacrificing devotion which extorts a tribute of admiration even from sectarian bigotry. While the colder apostles of Protestantism labored upon the outskirts of heathendom, these champions of the Cross pierced the very heart of its dark and dreary domain, confronting death at every step and well repaid for all could they but sprinkle a few drops of water on the forehead of a dying child or hang a gilded crucifix round the neck of some warrior,"* pleased with but unappreciative of the significance of the gift.

We have seen how Marquette longed to preach to the Illinois. As early as 1670, while at the Sault, he studied the Illinois dialects with an Illinois captive in order to go to them in their own country. We have seen, too, how when he visited them with Jolliet at their great town, called Kaskaskia, near Fort St. Louis, they made him promise to return and instruct them. It was, then, as a blessed privilege, that in the fall of 1674, while at St. Xavier, he received the order to establish a mission among the Illinois.

Accordingly, on October 25, thinking himself

* PARKMAN: "Conspiracy of Pontiac."

well enough to do so, he left the mission at St. Xavier for the Illinois. He had as his companions two Frenchmen, one of whom had been with him and Jolliet in 1673, and at Sturgeon Bay they were joined by several canoes of Illinois and Pottawatomies. Coasting Lake Michigan at that season, in a frail canoe proved, however, so exhausting a task that on reaching Chicago River, which he did on December 4, Marquette's old malady, dysentery with hemorrhage, had returned, and he was compelled to remain at the portage for the winter. The season was very severe, and Marquette's home was but a miserable cabin of some unknown trapper or fur trader, located near the portage to the Desplaines, some two miles up the river.* Here he was ministered to by his men and by the sympathetic Indians, as well as by roving woodsmen, as best they could. Although he gained little strength during the winter, when early spring came (March 29, 1675), he resumed his journey, reaching the Illinois town on April 8. Sick unto death, he nevertheless proceeded with his long sought duty, and founded his mission, to which he gave his favorite name, "Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin,"† the first Christian church planted in

* A simple marker has lately been erected, in the form of a cross, to indicate the supposed site of this cabin.

† MARQUETTE: "Unfinished Diary," the water-stained MSS. of which is now held as a sacred relic at St. Mary's College, Montreal.

the Mississippi Valley, which through many vicissitudes of time and place has never wholly ceased to be. But as continued illness brought the realization that his end was approaching, he cut short his work through physical inability to continue it. For several days he taught the Indians in their cabins and in the council, and on Holy Thursday he preached to the assembled tribes to the number of two thousand on the meadow near the town, where he had erected a rude altar and exhibited pictures of the Virgin, explaining their significance and exhorting with rare eloquence the chiefs and the people to embrace Christianity.

This was the end of his life's work. Knowing death to be near to him and desiring to die if possible at St. Ignace, immediately after Easter (April 14 that year) he bade his loved Illinois farewell, and sustained by his faithful companions, painfully made his way toward the north, taking the route *via* the Kankakee and St. Joseph Rivers and the eastern shore.

After infinite suffering by Marquette, only slightly relieved by the devotion of his men, the party at length reached the mouth of Marquette River, or inlet, where now is the city of Ludington, Mich. He had spoken much of his approaching end "with so great tranquillity and presence of mind that one might have supposed that he was

concerned with the death of some other person and not his own"; and seeing here an "eminence that he deemed well suited to the place of his interment," he told his people that "that was the place of his last repose." There on May 18, 1675, Mar-



APPROXIMATE SITE OF THE MISSION OF THE IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION TO THE ILLINOIS.

quette died, passing to his rest "with a countenance beaming and all aglow." He expired without a struggle "and so gently it might have been regarded as a pleasant sleep."*

* DABLON: "Relation of 1675."

His body was buried as he had directed, at a spot overlooking the lake; but a year later his Indian friends from Mackinac removed the bones to St. Ignace where they were again buried with some ceremony in a vault made under the floor of the log chapel. In the process of time, this mission having been abandoned, the log church was burned in 1700, and Marquette's resting place was forgotten. It was discovered, however, in 1877 by Rev. Father Edward Jacker, a missionary in charge at St. Ignace, through whose activity a monument has since been erected to the devoted priest's memory. Some parts of his remains still repose at St. Ignace, while others are at Marquette College, Milwaukee.*

Thus died at the age of thirty-eight one of the noblest and purest men whose names adorn the annals of the Northwest. A man of cheerful, joyous disposition, playful in his manner, "whose letters show us a man of education, close observation, sound sense and a freedom from exaggeration," while yet a vein of humor breaks out in spite of his self-command.† His unselfish and saintly life is still an "inspiration to men of every creed and calling," while his accomplishments as a scholar and energy as a man of action mark him as one of the rare men of his age.

* THWAITES: "Father Marquette."

† KIP: "Early Jesuit Missions."

After Marquette died Father Daloës charged himself with the Illinois mission. Father Marest in a letter to Father Germon, dated November 9, 1712, written at Kaskaskia (on the Mississippi), says Father Daloës "was acquainted with the language of the Miamis, which approaches very nearly to that of the Illinois. He, however, made but a short sojourn, having the idea while there that he should be able to accomplish more in a different country, where indeed he ended his apostolic life." [No dates are given.]

Two years after Marquette the indefatigable Claude Allouez was sent to the Kas-
kaskia mission, thus identifying with Starved Rock and the Illinois a name that is famous in the annals of the Northwest. Born at Toulouse, Father Allouez went to Canada in 1658, and as early as 1661 or 1662 succeeded the aged Father Ménard at the mission at La Pointe on Chaquemagon Bay, at the extremity of Lake Superior, the southern shore of which he explored in part. In 1669 he was sent to the Mascoutins on Green Bay, establishing there the mission of St. Francis Xavier, where De Pere, Wis., now stands. Later he preached to the Foxes on Wolf River, but he found them in an ill-humor with the French, and they received the Faith with

Claude Allouez

shouts of derision, to the good Father's great distress. When St. Lusson at the Sault made his proclamation of possession of the Northwest, it was Allouez who made the address to the Indians, a speech which is preserved by Dablon in the "Relation of 1671."

In the fall of 1676, when at Green Bay, he received the order to go to the Illinois. He set out along the western shore of Lake Michigan, but he wintered on the way and did not reach the Illinois town until April 27, 1677, where he was lodged in the cabin of Marquette. He erected an altar in the house of the chief of the tribe he meant to interest; and the sachems, with "all the people, being there assembled, I told them," he reports, "the object of my coming among them, namely, to preach the true living and immortal God and His son Jesus Christ. They listened very attentively to my whole discourse, and thanked me for the trouble I took for their salvation."

He describes the town and its location as we have had it before, making the number of cabins three hundred and fifty-one. As to his work, he says that he relaid the foundation of the Illinois mission by the baptism of thirty-five children and a sick adult who soon after died; and that on May 3, 1677, the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross, he erected in the town a cross twenty-five feet high

and chanted the *Vexilla* in the presence of "a great number of Illinois of all tribes."

Father Allouez remained in the Illinois country for the remainder of his life; but in 1679 he retired from the Illinois village at the advance of La Salle, for these men mutually disliked each other, and betook himself to the Mascoutins at Chicago or to the Miamis or other tribes who happened to be in his neighborhood, remaining with them so long as La Salle himself was in the country. In 1684 he again came to the town and to the Rock with Durantaye, commandant at Mackinac, during De Baugis' command. Again we find him there in 1687 when Cavelier, Douay and Joutel were at the Rock; but as they reported La Salle to be on his way to the Fort, Allouez, although ill, retired among the Miamis. He may have returned after La Salle's death became known. He died at Fort Miami in 1690.

Allouez was one of the ablest of all the Jesuits sent to the Illinois; but he was a cold man, whose influence was due to his intellectual powers rather than to his ability to impress men with the love he really bore to the race. As a churchman of zeal and piety, he was inferior to none of his day; while as an explorer his name will ever be renowned in the West.

Although La Salle had an aversion to the Jesuits

in general, who, he always believed, and with some reason, were hostile, if not actively his enemies, and a dislike to Allouez in particular, he was still a profoundly religious man, and was invariably accompanied in his expeditions by the "Black Gowns," notably the Récollet fathers Gabriel de la Ribourde, Zenobius Membré and Louis Hennepin. In the year 1680 the two former took up the work abandoned by Allouez (and by Father James Gravier, who, soon after Allouez retired before La Salle, made the Illinois a brief visit) and were with Tonty on the memorable day of the Iroquois attack. After their escape from the Iroquois, Tonty and his Frenchmen with the two Fathers embarked, on September 18, for Green Bay. On the next day, when the men were repairing their injured canoe, the aged Father Ribourde retired apart to say his breviary; and while thus engaged, was set upon by a party of Kickapoos who ruthlessly murdered him—the first martyr to the Church in the Mississippi Valley.

It cannot be said that their mission was a success, in spite of their piety and zeal. They baptised some dying infants, but they made no adult converts.

The real successor, therefore, of Father Allouez at Kaskaskia was Father Sebastien Rale,* the most

* So written by himself, although the name is variously spelled Rasles, Rasle, Ralle, Rallé, and Rallee.

conspicuous and interesting figure among the later French-American Jesuits.* He was sent to the Illinois from Quebec, embarking in August, 1681, and arriving in the spring of 1682. He was heartily welcomed, and a great dog feast was served in his honor—the greatest his hosts could extend. The Faith made but little progress under his preaching, however, as he himself regretfully admitted; and after about two years he was recalled to Quebec and again sent to his original charge, the Abenakis on the Kennebec River.

In a letter written long after his stay in the Illinois, it being dated October 15, 1723, at Nanrant-souak (now Norridgewock, Maine), Father Rale gives an interesting description of the habits and customs of the Illinois.† The country, too, attracted him. "Of all the nations in Canada," he says, "there are none who live in so great abundance of everything as the Illinois." Christianity he thinks would have made greater progress among the Illinois if polygamy had been permitted. The Indians all attended chapel services regularly, and even their medicine men sent their children "to be instructed and baptised. In this," he adds, "consists the best fruits which our mission at first receives among the Indians, and which is the most

* PARKMAN: "Fifty Years of Conflict."

† KIP: "Early Jesuit Missions in North America."

certain; for among the great number of infants whom we baptise not a year passes but many die before they are able to use their reason. But even among the adults, the greater part are so fervent and so attached to the Prayer [Christianity] that they will suffer the most cruel death sooner than abandon it." One happy circumstance he notes in favor of the Illinois: they are so far distant from Quebec they cannot obtain liquor (the one drawback to life in Illinois noted by Joutel).

Father Rale's career at Norridgewock is told in a spirited chapter by Parkman in his "Fifty Years of Conflict." Rale was an intense partisan of France, and could not reconcile himself to the political cession of his village and mission to the English of Massachusetts; and in the course of the petty wars that ensued on the border, instigated in large measure by himself,* he was killed during an attack on Norridgewock by the Massachusetts men in August, 1724.

Father Rale is the "weary priest" of Whittier's narrative poem, "Mogg Megone"—

Ah, weary priest—with pale hands pressed
 On thy throbbing brow of pain,
 Baffled in thy life-long quest,
 Overworn with toiling vain,

* Rale was the last of that devoted order, who in the wilds of America had labored to attain simultaneously two incompatible objects—a spiritual kingdom for a heavenly Master, and a temporal one for an earthly sovereign.—EMMA WILLARD: "History of the United States."

How ill thy troubled musings fit
The holy quiet of a breast
With the Dove of Peace at rest,
Sweetly brooding over it.

After Father Rale, Allouez, as we have seen, returned and was a most attentive ministrant to the Kaskaskias, his absences being such as timed with the presence or anticipated coming of La Salle. Doubtless also the Abbé Cavelier and Father Douay exercised their priestly office during the winter of 1687-88, when they were guests at the Rock.

Father Gravier came a second time to the Kaskaskia mission in March, 1684, and built a chapel within the Fort on Starved Rock, by Tonty's permission, probably the first chapel on the Rock. He also built a second chapel outside the Fort among the Indians, and "planted before it a towering cross amid the shouts and musketry of the French." He remained in general charge of the mission until about February, 1694, when he was recalled to Mackinac.

Father Gravier is regarded as the most successful missionary to the Illinois in their ancient seat. He first investigated the principles of their language and reduced them to grammatical rules, so that, says Father Marest, "we have since only been obliged to bring to perfection what he began with so great success." Father Gravier, as Marest further tells us, "had at first much to suffer from

their medicine men, and his life was exposed to continual dangers; but nothing repulsed him, and he surmounted all these obstacles by his patience and mildness.'* Although he made among the Peorias a number of converts, who assembled even by themselves for morning and evening prayer, the head chief opposed him and the medicine men accused him of poisoning the dying adults whom he baptised.†

As a missionary to the Illinois, Father Gravier was not a little assisted by Mary, daughter of the head chief and the wife of Michael Ako, whom La Salle sent to the Mississippi, accompanied by Father Hennepin. On his return to the Illinois, Ako seems to have lived as a trader, probably in the employ of Tonty, at the Rock, or in the town, and wished to marry the Indian girl against her will but with her father's consent. Father Gravier sided with the maiden and suffered many indignities therefor from both the Indians and the French. The chief abused the daughter also for her obstinacy, and not only ordered the converts to remain away from chapel services, but attempted to break up the latter by force. Mary at length yielded to her parent's wish in the hope that she might, by this self-sacrifice, be the means of

* KIP: "Early Jesuit Missions."

† SHEA: "Catholic Missions to the Indian Tribes of the U. S."

bringing both Ako and her parents into the fold of Christ. Ultimately her wish, we are told by Dr. Shea, in a sympathetic chapter,* was fully gratified, as she became the means of bringing not only Ako and her father, the chief, but many other souls to the church. Indeed, so great was the impulse to the good Father's work, given by these conversions through the instrumentality of Mme. Ako and her work among the children, that Father Gravier "had three-fourths of the Kaskaskia village crowded into his cabin, young and old, chief and matrons, all ready to answer the questions of the Catechism and eager to receive a token of his approval, while the children, day and night, sang in the streets of the village the hymns which he composed, embodying the truths of Christianity."† During eight months of 1693 he baptised two hundred and six souls, many of them infants, whom, we are told, "he was enabled to bathe in the sacramental water only by stratagem."

Father Gravier when recalled to Mackinac was

* SHEA: "Catholic Missions," etc.

† In the oldest record of the church found at [the new] Kaskaskia, the "Register of Baptisms of the Mission of the Illinois, of the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin," the first entry bears date March 20, 1695. Retaining the French spelling of the names, it reads as follows: "In the year 1695, March 20th, I, Jacques Gravier, of the Society of Jesus, baptised Pierre Aco, newly-born of P. Michael Aco. Godfather was De Hautchy, godmother, Maria Arampinchicoue; Maria Joanna, grandmother of the child."—BRESE: "Early History of Illinois."

succeeded by Fathers Binneteau and Pinet. Father Julien Binneteau, like Father Rale, came from the Abanakis of the Kennebec, where he was in 1693. He was on the St. Lawrence in 1694 and among the Illinois in 1695. They preached and taught among the various tribes at several points along the Illinois River. Father Pinet* founded the mission to the Tamaroas, near the mouth of Illinois River, now known as Cahokia. Father Marest in his letter† quoted above says that in company with Fathers Pinet and Binneteau‡ he labored

* Pinet (Pierre Francois) was born at Périgueux, France, Nov. 11, 1660; novitiate at Bordeaux in 1682; went to Canada in 1694. He was first sent to Mackinac, but in 1696 came to the Illinois, founding the mission of the Guardian Angel at Chicago among the Miamis. A year later the mission was broken up, when Father Pinet came to the Kaskaskias for a short time before founding a mission among the Tamaroas at Cahokia. This mission was ordered transferred from the Jesuits in 1698 to the Seminary (Séminaire des Missions Étrangères), but Pinet remained among the Tamaroas until 1702, when he went to the Kaskaskias again, then at their new home on the Mississippi. He died at Cahokia about 1704.—THWAITES: "Jesuit Relations," Vol. 64, p. 278. See also SHEA: "Catholic Missions," etc.

† KIP: "Jesuit Missions," etc.

‡ Julien Binneteau (Binteau) was born at La Flèche, France, on March 13, 1653; was a Jesuit novitiate at Paris, 1676; instructor at Rouen, Nevers, Amiens, Caen; went to Canada in 1691; and was sent to Kaskaskia in 1696. He remained in the Illinois until his death on Dec. 24, 1699. Father Binneteau was a victim of the migratory habits of the Indians whom he followed during the hunting seasons—the spring hunt of not to exceed three weeks; that of the winter, which lasted four to five months. Father Marest wrote to Father Germon, Nov. 9, 1712:—"He accompanied the savages in the greatest heat of July; sometimes he was in danger of smothering amid the grass which was extremely high; sometimes he suffered cruelly from thirst, not finding in the dried-up prairies a single drop of water to allay it. By day he was drenched with perspiration, and at night he was obliged to sleep on the ground, exposed to the dew and to many other inconveniences, concerning which I will not go into detail. These hardships brought upon him a violent sickness, from which he expired in my arms."—THWAITES: "Jesuit Relations," Vols. 65 and 66.

among the Illinois in the great town on the Illinois, "my former residence," for some time, or until their deaths, after which he remained in sole charge of the Kaskaskia mission on the Illinois until the coming to Kaskaskia [on the Mississippi] of Father Mermet.

About 1700 Father Gravier made a voyage down the Mississippi from Mackinac *via* the Illinois. This voyage, as we saw in the previous chapter, was rather a political than a missionary journey; but he waited at Biloxi for supplies from France for the missions on the Illinois, with which he returned to the Peorias, among whom he renewed his work.

On one occasion when the Indians were incited to a mutiny, the Father was dangerously wounded and narrowly escaped with his life. The account of this attack on Father Gravier is told by Father Mermet in a letter* to the Jesuits in Canada, under date March 2, 1706. It seems that the Peoria chiefs had agreed to send one of their number to Canada to the governor to account for the death of a soldier who had been killed by the Illinois; but when at Mackinac, while intending to go on with M. Desliettes (a relative of Henry de Tonty, whose family name was Desliettes, or Delietto), the chief and his companions learned that those

* THWAITES: "Jesuit Relations," Vols. 64 and 65.

who went down to Montreal on such mission were frequently tortured at the stake, he resolved to turn back; and being further told by other Indians that in order to avoid the consequences of his action he must do something to make himself feared by the French, he secretly followed Father Gravier from Mackinac to the Peoria village and there stirred up a mutiny against him, in which Father Gravier was wounded. Two arrows struck him in the breast, a third tore his ear, a fourth struck his collar bone, while the fifth pierced the arm above the wrist and penetrated to below the elbow. This was the mortal shot. The arrow was drawn out, but the head remained in the wound. A good Samaritan Indian and the squaws did what they could for him; and he eventually reached the Mississippi at Kaskaskia (Rouensac of the "Relation"), where the missionaries tried to cure him and afterwards sent him to Mobile for treatment; thence late in 1706 he went to Paris with the same object. In 1708 he returned to America, where he soon afterwards died, apparently from the effects of his wound. He was born at Moulins, on May 17, 1651; educated at Paris; went to Canada in 1685; and to Illinois in 1688.

In 1698 came Father P. Gabriel Marest, under whose guidance and direction the mission was removed to the Kaskaskia of our time—the first cap-

ital of the state of Illinois, on the banks of the Mississippi.* Father Marest is another noted churchman of the West. In 1694 he had accompanied D'Iberville's expedition to the Hudson Bay, that dislodged the English traders in that region; and he there began a mission to the Indians, but in 1695 when the forts were recovered by the English, he was captured and sent a prisoner to Plymouth, England, and later sent to France. It was, therefore, soon after his release that he came to Illinois. Father Marest's letter, published by Kip *supra*, recounting his experiences in the Illinois, is a most interesting and valuable document, as it gives us many data concerning this mission not found elsewhere.

Father Marest tried to civilize the Illinois as well as Christianize them; and taught them how to cultivate the soil and to breed the domestic animals; and under his instruction and influence, the Illinois became the most peaceful and industrious of the western tribes. The town at this time had about twenty-two hundred people, said by the Father's biographer to have been all Christians except about forty or fifty. It was no doubt due to him directly that the Illinois country later so

* The removal of the mission included the removal of the name of the town also, Kaskaskia, thus creating the confusion apparent in many minds, who have thought the mission was always located at Kaskaskia on the Mississippi.

rapidly developed its agricultural resources that the new settlement became the source of the grain and flour consumed by the French settlements along the lower Mississippi.

Of his missionary work Father Marest himself says: "Nothing is more difficult than the conversion of these savages; it is a miracle of the Lord's mercy. It is necessary first to transform them into men; and afterwards to labor to make them Christians." The task was so nearly impossible that he says: "We cannot attribute the conversions either to the forcible arguments of the missionary, or to his eloquence, or to his other talents which might be useful in other countries but which can produce no impression on the minds of our Indians; we can render the glory to Him alone who even of these stones knows how to make, when it pleases Him, children unto Abraham."

The removal of the mission to Kaskaskia on the Mississippi took place in 1700; for Father Gravier, in his journal of the voyage from Mackinac to the mouth of the Mississippi in 1700, having left Chicago on September 8, 1700, says he reached the Illinois town (the original Kaskaskia) too late to prevent the migration which was directed and led by Father Marest. He overtook the people, however, and marched four days with them down the Illinois; and on October 9, 1700, he left Father

Marest sick at the village of the Tamaroas, where a halt had been made.*

This migration of missionaries and Indians was the natural result of the decay of the Rock's importance as a commercial point, for reasons explained in the previous chapter, and to a desire for a consolidation of the western, or Illinois, tribes against those new firebrands of the West, the Foxes, at some point as remote as practicable from the war trails of the latter in their wars with the French in the Great Lakes country, to which we shall now give some attention.

*Father Gravier, in a "Relation" addressed to Father de Lamber-ville, Feb'y 16, 1701, says of this migration, that starting from Chicago on Sept. 8, 1700, "I arrived too late among the Illinois of the strait (Peorias), of whom Father Marest has charge, to prevent the migration of the village of Kaskaskia, which had been too precipitately made, in consequence of uncertain news respecting the Mississippi settlement." He saw only a mistake in the movement, which would divide the tribes; "and may God grant that the road [waterway] from Chikagoua to the strait [outlet of Peoria lake] be not closed, and that the entire Illinois mission may not suffer greatly thereby. I admit to you, my Reverend Father, that my heart is heavy at seeing my former flock thus divided and scattered." He traveled four days with the Kaskaskias; and then went on to Father Pinet at the Tamaroa mission. The Kaskaskias had intended to go to Louisiana, near D'Iberville's new settlement; but Father Gravier induced them to stop when they reached the Mississippi, at the late modern village of Kaskaskia (which has wholly disappeared in the river). This village the Indians called Rouensac, in honor of their Chief Rouensa; but the mission perpetuated its ancient name, given it by Marquette. When a French trading post was established there, the nucleus of the permanent village was made, the traders and voyageurs taking Indian wives. (See THWAITES: "Jesuit Relations," Vol. 65.) Father Marest died on the Mississippi, on Sept. 15, 1714.



STARVED ROCK LOOKING WEST FROM LOVER'S LEAP.

THE DRAMA OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

God said, I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;

* * * *

My angel,—his name is Freedom,—
Choose him to be your King;
He shall cut pathways east and west,
And fend you with his wing.

—Emerson.

THE POLITICAL PROBLEM OF THE FRENCH.

We come now to the part played by Starved Rock in the momentous drama of the eighteenth century, when the great struggle took place between freedom and absolutism for the possession of the fairest and richest part of the North American continent. When the century opened, the French empire in America was at the flood tide of its prosperity. The triple alliance of priest, soldier and trader had with unerring instinct and judgment taken possession of every route to the interior of the continent, and had so united the native tribes in the French interest that Canada and her western frontier were deemed so secure that, as we have seen, most of the distant garrisons were withdrawn as unnecessary to the preservation of colonial autonomy.* In the far South, though La Salle's

* PARKMAN: "A Half Century of Conflict."

schemes had come to naught, they had been revived seven years after his death by Tonty, who had successfully "urged the seizure of Louisiana for three reasons: firstly, as a base of attack upon Mexico; secondly, as a depot for the furs and lead ores of the interior; and, thirdly, as the only means of preventing the English from becoming masters of the West."*

More successful than La Salle, D'Iberville, though he built his fort at Biloxi [Mississippi] and not on the river, had actually taken possession of the mouth of the Mississippi, thus outwitting the English, who were in fact on the point of seizing the river, and retarding for more than a hundred years the development of Louisiana on lines of English freedom. New France had, therefore, two heads: one looking to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the other to the Gulf of Mexico; and if the northern wing of the colony had its hardly concealed jealousy of the southern, it nevertheless appreciated the value of the latter as an aid to stem the incoming tide of English influence in the north.

One strategic mistake only had the builders of

* Although there were attempts by Gov. Berkeley of Virginia as early as 1650 to cross the Alleghenies, and Col. Abraham Wood, a Virginian, in 1654-64 followed streams that found their outlet in the Ohio and Mississippi, anticipating Jolliet and Marquette in the valley by ten to twenty years, nevertheless up to nearly the end of that century the colonial enterprises in the West were few and far between; and New France had had ample time to make good her control of the interior.

the Franco-American empire made, but it was vital —irremediable: they had neglected the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers of New York, which were occupied by the Dutch, who were even shrewder traders than the French and more far-seeing. Up to about this time, too, the English had been content to occupy as agriculturists a narrow strip along the Atlantic coast, where they busied themselves, and, fortunately for future generations in America, worried themselves, too, and their governors, with questions of political and religious rights and privileges, rather than with what the continent contained behind the Appalachian wall which few of them cared to penetrate or to cross. The Hudson and the Mohawk Rivers however pierced that wall; and when the Dutch possessions in New York came into the hands of the English, the character of the Albany colony did not wholly change, but the Englishman, coming nearer to it, began to appreciate the possibilities of the vast interior for trade from Albany; for even then the Englishman was quite as accomplished a trader as the Dutchman.

For twenty-five years the English traders had been established on Hudson Bay, diverting the northern trade of New France from the St. Lawrence. If now the English should also get a foothold on the Great Lakes and in the famous beaver country of the present Michigan peninsula, and

cross the mountain wall into the Ohio country and reach the Mississippi in that direction, the northern wing of New France would be hemmed within very narrow limits indeed, and her trade ruined by the cheaper and better goods of the Yankees.*

The cession to the English by the Iroquois in 1701 of all their claims to the country formerly occupied by the Hurons precipitated the struggle which the shrewd Count Frontenac had long foreseen, but which the politico-clerical influence with his successors and the proverbial corruption of the court at Quebec had left the colony more or less unprepared to meet. These Iroquois lands were bounded by the Lakes Ontario, Huron and Erie, and "contained in length about 800 miles and in breadth 400 miles, including the country where beavers and all sorts of wild game keep."† They pierced the very heart of New France.

The problem, then, that confronted the French authorities at Quebec was how to stem this unpropitious tide. The building of a fort at the foot of Huron by Du Lhut in 1686 was a beginning of a defense, which was followed by another at Detroit in 1701 by La Mothe Cadillac, closing the St. Clair River to the English. Another step in the same direction brings us back again to Starved Rock and the Illinois.

* Even the coureurs and voyageurs from Mackinac and the Sault carried on a surreptitious trade with the Albany English to obtain the latter's low-priced goods.

† HINSDALE: "The Old Northwest."

STARVED ROCK IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Freedom all winged expands,
Nor perches in a narrow place;
Her broad van seeks unplanted lands.
—Emerson.

THE INDIAN SIEGES.

Wherever the French came in contact with them, their relations with the Indians were for the most part singularly felicitous.* This fact may find explanation, aside from the natural adaptability of the French and a tendency of the woodsmen to coalesce with the Indians, in the circumstance that they made no effort to dispossess the Indians of

* There were two exceptions: the Foxes, whose fortunes we are about to follow, and the Iroquois—both hated the French. The unrelenting enmity of the Iroquois is attributed to the unwise killing by Champlain, on July 30, 1609, near Ticonderoga, of two Mohawk chiefs, in a foray from Quebec with two other Frenchmen and a war party of Hurons and Algonquins. The story has been frequently told; but the effect has recently been epitomized by Harvey in "Champlain as a Herald of Washington" (*Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1909) as follows: "The fight was notable only because it was the first fight on the Atlantic coast of North America in which white men appeared as allies of any of the Indians, and the first, on the northern half of the coast, in which firearms figured; and because it started the blood feud between the Iroquois confederation and the French owners of Canada, which lasted until Champlain's countrymen, more than a century and a half later, were driven off the continent." And because, as we may add, it placed the Five Nations on the side of the Dutch and English in the future struggle, and erected a wall between France and the more southern colonies.

their lands or hunting grounds. It was agreed, at least tacitly, that the savages should be left in undisturbed possession of the whole of the vast domain of the West on condition that they allowed the French to control or monopolize its trade. Besides, the *coureurs des bois*, who made New France and built the chain of forts which bound the West to Canada, though proud of their French blood and language, were in the bush quite as much Indian as French, and thus they had immense influence over the savages. Above all, the *coureurs* hated the English; and being the shrewdest of diplomats they won over the Indians to themselves, and both patrolled the forests and lakes as against the venturesome Englishmen. Even the Iroquois had become neutral for the time, and the destiny of America seemed already decided; for "the lilies of France floated without opposition over the entire expanse from Quebec to the mouth of the Mississippi, and from the Alleghenies to the base of the Rocky Mountains."*

But the curse of Canada was the monopoly held by the one trading company which had legal control of all the commerce of the colony, and whose goods were not only poorer but were extortionately high as compared with those of the English. The Indians were not slow to discover this difference,

* HEBBERD: "Wisconsin under the Dominion of France."

and they began to chafe under the French trading yoke. This was especially true of the Foxes of Wisconsin, a nation whose renown for bravery, independence, intractability and endurance was then second to that of no tribe of the West.

There was, however, another reason for Fox hatred of the French than merely commercial dissatisfaction. The first white man they knew was Nicolas Perrot, an able and tactful man by whom they were favorably impressed; but after him other Frenchmen went among them, who outraged the Foxes by their shocking conduct and their offensive personal bearing. This feeling of hostility reached a climax when some Foxes who had made the great voyage to Montreal were there maltreated by French soldiers. The Foxes were a proud race; and this ignominy so determined them on revenge that not a trader or traveller thereafter dared to venture into their vicinity. The affair, in fact, was quite as disastrous to the French in the West as Champlain's ill-timed attack on the Mohawks in 1609 had been to them in the east.

This hostility of the Foxes continued for the entire period of their contact with the French; and ultimately it was extended to their Indian allies also, as the French came to be more and more in touch with the tribes of the West. La Salle did not come into contact with the Foxes when forming his

confederacy of defense against the Iroquois, nor did they annoy him or his allies until after 1700; but for thirty years or more they kept the tribes in Wisconsin and the West generally in continual disorder. During all of Frontenac's second administration the Foxes were in secret or open rebellion, which he was able neither to punish nor suppress. A sort of universal peace was patched up among the tribes by his successor, Hector de Callières, in 1701, in which the Foxes took part to the extent that their spokesman at the treaty-making wound up his speech by saying: "I now regard the Iroquois as my brother; but I am at war with the Sioux" (quasi-friends of the French in the far west).

There was quiet for the time in the east; but the Upper Country was no safer than before. As early as 1699 the Fox-Wisconsin waterway had been closed to all travelers. Father St. Cosme that year reports that he found it necessary to go to the Mississippi *via* the Chicago portage because "the Foxes who are on this little [Fox] river that you ascend on leaving the Bay to reach the Wesconsin will not suffer any person to pass for fear they will go to places at war with them, and hence have already plundered several Frenchmen who wished to go by that road."

It was no better after the peace. In 1702 a Mon-

treal merchant going to the Sioux country was plundered of goods worth 25,000 to 30,000 francs; Juchereau de St. Denis from Mackinac had to bribe them to let his canoes pass; and a French garrison of a fort in the Sioux country was dispersed, some of the men being killed. It is not surprising then that men of Cadillac's and Du Lhut's type complained of the too hasty evacuation of the forts a few years before—a policy of non-interference which Cadillac said exposed Frenchmen “to humiliations and insults which they have so often endured without being able to help it, such as being plundered and cruelly beaten, which has disgraced the name of France among these tribes.”

This daring misbehavior of the Foxes so exasperated the French that annihilation came to be the policy of the government; and it was understood among the Indian allies of the French that the governor, Marquis de Vaudreuil, desired the utter extermination of the Fox nation.* The first step thereto was the granting of permission to Cadillac to found a colony at Detroit, as a substitute for Du Lhut's fort at St. Joseph on Lake Huron, closed by the order of 1699; and to this new post, by some rare and inexplicable chance, a large body of Foxes migrated, the Detroit fort being surrounded by cantons of Indians as was La Salle's

* HEBBERD: “Wisconsin,” etc.

Fort St. Louis on the Illinois. But there was at Detroit no diplomat with La Salle's finesse or Tonty's skill of address and appealing fairness and generosity to keep these various tribes from flying at each other's throats; and soon there was war among the allies, which Cadillac made no real pretense of checking. The massacre of the Foxes at Detroit in 1712 may or may not have been deliberately planned by the French, but it seems to have been so understood by the allies, who, after the nineteen days' siege of the Foxes' stockade was over, wherein several hundred Foxes were butchered, set out for Quebec to claim the reward which they insisted the governor had promised for the Foxes' destruction.*

The tragedy at Detroit, although it crippled the Fox nation, did not destroy it nor break the spirit of those indomitable savages, or of their allies, the Kickapoos and Mascoutins of Rock River; it only intensified their dislike of the French into a deep and undying hatred.

After a short peace, or truce, during which they made an alliance with the Sioux, the Foxes in small war parties not only made life in the woods near Detroit a terror for the French and their allies alike, but they began to harass the Peorias and Kaskaskias also; so that by 1714 the latter were

* PARKMAN: "Half Century of Conflict."

practically driven away from their old homes on the Illinois to the protecting arms of the French at Kaskaskia and Fort Chartres on the Mississippi, only the Peorias remaining at their ancient seat on Illinois River. Thus the Foxes, with their settlement on Fox River of Wisconsin and by their dispersion of the Illinois from their old homes, had become virtual masters of both lines of travel between the east and the west, and communication between Canada and Louisiana became exceedingly difficult and dangerous. In fact, they had practically split the empire of New France asunder, and trade was ruined; for the east was never rich in furs, and fur-bearing animals rapidly disappeared when civilization came to the country. At the same time, the Iroquois had always placed a barrier in the way to the Ohio basin, that prevented the French from access to Louisiana by that desirable route.

The situation had become desperate therefore; and in 1716 De Louvigny was sent with eight hundred French and Indian allies to crush the Foxes at their Wisconsin villages. The latter were badly punished and gave hostages to preserve peace, and even made a pretense of keeping it; nevertheless they prepared for the future. A Fox orator visited all the tribes who knew the French, and endeavored to rouse them to action against the whites, going

as far south as the Chickasaws. Such a confederation was not consummated; but when in 1718 it appeared that but one of the Fox hostages remained alive and that he had been mutilated by the loss of an eye by his hosts' abuse, the Foxes again became restless and began anew to harass the Illinois, "the devoted henchmen of their French masters."* Taking advantage of the visible rivalry between Canada and Louisiana and the indifference of Canadians to their countrymen's troubles in the West,† the Foxes and their allies struck the Illinois with impunity, driving them to very gates of Fort Chartres.

Again in 1722 another crisis came. The Illinois captured the nephew of Oushala (or Ouachala), the principal Fox war chief, and burned him alive. A fury of revenge seized the Fox nation. A large war party was immediately formed of Foxes with their allies, the Mascoutins, Kickapoos, Winnebagoes, Sauks, Sioux, and Abenakis, who advanced into the Illinois country and attacked them, driving the Illinois to the top of Starved Rock for refuge, and held them there at mercy. This Illinois tribe was the Peorias, whose home was on Peoria Lake, the last of the tribes to cling to the neighborhood of this famous stronghold of La

* PARKMAN: "Half Century of Conflict."

† The government of Louisiana had been transferred from Canada to Paris in 1701.

Salle, all the other tribes having fled to the southwest. "Unluckily we know nothing of the details of the siege, except the number of the slain: twenty Peorias and one hundred and twenty of the besiegers," says Heberd. "But the bare figures are eloquent; they tell not of a mere blockade, but of fierce assaults, storming parties, desperate attempts to scale the heights—the old story of Foxes' fury and reckless courage."

The Foxes for some unexplained reason raised the siege, thus sparing the Peorias' lives, for which subsequently they desired praise of the French. Charlevoix* says the Foxes were defeated; but the result of the Fox campaign was the abandonment of their country by the Peorias (who retired, for a time at least, to their kindred tribes on the Mississippi), and "the domination by the Renards of the second great waterway (the Desplaines-Illinois River) between Canada and Louisiana,"† the very heart of New France.‡ News of this attack on the Peorias having reached Fort Chartres, a detachment of a hundred men, commanded by Chevalier d'Artaguiette and Sieur de Tisne, was sent to their assistance, but before this reinforcement reached the Rock, the Foxes raised the siege and departed.

* CHARLEVOIX: "History of New France."

† KELLOGG: "The Fox Indians During the French Regime."

‡ BECKWITH: "The Illinois and Indiana Indians."

The affair "was a grave disaster for the French," Charlevoix says; "for now that there is nothing to check the raids of the Foxes, communication between Canada and Louisiana became less practicable." At Versailles this offense of the Foxes seemed unpardonable, and the colonial minister declared that, "The Outagamies [Foxes] must be effectually put down, and that his Majesty will reward the officer who will reduce, or, rather, destroy them."*

Nevertheless the destruction of the Foxes proceeded but slowly. Their Indian allies were faint-hearted and the French officers were scarcely less reluctant to attack the Foxes. This unwillingness to act provoked from Paris a sharp rebuke of the governor, because, the minister said, he had learned that the commandants at Detroit and Mackinac and other places had prevented raids on the Foxes.† The Illinois country suffered severely; the settlements were all but ruined; but as long as the Illinois alone suffered, the Canadians took but little interest; as was seen when Lignery went to Green Bay and concluded a peace between the Foxes and their allies and the Saulteur and Ottawas, without including the Illinois; for which he was sharply rebuked by the court: "It looks as

* PARKMAN: "Half Century of Conflict."

† KELLOGG: "The Fox Indians During the French Regime," in Proceedings Wis. Hist. Society, 1907.

if he tried to ruin the fur trade from Louisiana.”

In 1726 Lignery made another paper peace which did not include the Illinois; but quiet did not come with his treaty; so that in 1728 he started once more to punish the Foxes. He took from Quebec some five hundred Frenchmen, to whom were added a thousand Indians, intending to destroy the Foxes at their Wisconsin villages; and in August they burned the cabins and destroyed the crops, but his nimble enemies escaped him. However, the effect upon the Foxes was severe, as the affair cost them the loss of valuable allies.

There were still other attempts to crush the Foxes, but without effect, until in 1730, Coulon de Villiers, who in 1754 defeated George Washington at Fort Necessity, appeared at Quebec with the news that his father, commander of La Salle's old Fort Miami on St. Joseph River, had struck the Foxes a telling, if not crushing, blow, by killing two hundred of their warriors and six hundred of the women and children, operating with a force of one hundred and seventy Frenchmen who had been gathered from various western posts and were assisted by twelve to thirteen hundred Indian allies, under Sieurs de Saint-Ange, father and son, from the Illinois settlements, and De Noyelles, from among the Miamis in Indiana.

“The accounts of the affair are obscure and not

very trustworthy," says Parkman. "It seems that the Foxes began the fray by an attack on the Illinois at La Salle's old station of La Rocher [Starved Rock], on the river Illinois. On hearing of this the French commanders mustered their Indian allies, hastened to the spot, and found the Foxes intrenched in a grove which they had surrounded with a stockade."

Beauharnois writing to the Minister, October 28, 1730, said: "The Renards had taken some Illinois prisoners and burned near the Rock the son of the great chief. Then the savages assembled. Saint-Ange was at the head of the French and three hundred to four hundred Indians, five hundred men in all. The Kickapoos, Mascoutins and Illinois of the Rock [Peorias: fifty fighting men, according to a census of 1736] had made themselves masters of the passes on the northeast side; and this probably compelled the Renards to build a fort at La Rocher [the Rock], a league below, to protect themselves against the attacks. One of the scouts from the fort on August 12 reported one hundred and eleven cabins; and on the 17th the army arrived at the Rock."

Kellogg, on the other hand, says that the Foxes had accepted a secret offer of an asylum among the Iroquois and were on the march eastward and that when Dubisson at Mackinac heard of the mi-

gration, being informed of it by certain Kickapoos and Mascoutins who had abandoned the Fox alliance, he summoned aid from Fort Chartres, Fort St. Joseph and Fort Miami, whose commanders brought their Indian allies.

The Foxes on finding themselves pursued in such force built a fort on the prairie "sixty leagues south of the end of Lake Michigan"* and between the Rock and Ouiantenon (a fort near the site of the present city of Lafayette, Indiana), and there defended themselves in a siege lasting twenty-three days.

"The Foxes," says Ferland,† "had chosen an admirable position near, or in, a piece of woods upon a slope by the side of a small river. Although outnumbered four to one, they fought with their usual dash and valor, making desperate sorties, but

* There is great difference of opinion as to the location of this battle, and exactness will not be possible. Hocquart, the intendant of Canada at the time, informed the court that the Fox fort was "in a plain between the River Wabache and the River of the Illinois, about sixty leagues [?] to the south of the extremity of Lake Michigan and to the east of the Rock in the Illinois country." J. F. Steward ("Lost Maramech and Earliest Chicago") locates the scene of this struggle on Fox River near Plano, Ill., where he has marked the supposed spot with a great boulder; but we must confess his proofs of locality are not entirely convincing. (See also Mr. Steward's paper, "Conflicting Accounts Found in Early Illinois History," in *Transactions of Ill. Hist. Society* for 1908.) Walter B. Douglas, in "The Sieurs de Saint-Ange" (*Trans. Ill. Hist. Society*, 1909), says this fight took place in what is now La Salle county and that the "small river" was the present Covell Creek. This is the most likely supposition proposed, in view of the relative nearness to the Rock to Covell Creek at any point of its course, only a few miles eastward at the most.

† Ferland: "Cours d'Histoire du Canada."

were each time driven back by the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. The French, on their part, dug trenches and proceeded with all the caution they had been taught by many campaigns against these redoubtable foes.

“After a while the supply of food gave out, and famine reigned in both camps. The Foxes and the French suffered alike under the calm, cruel impartiality of nature. Two hundred Illinois Indians deserted. But the French persevered, and began the construction of a fort to prevent the besieged from going to the river for water. Further resistance now seemed impossible. But on the 8th of September a violent storm arose, accompanied by heavy thunder and torrents of rain. The following night was rainy, dark and cold; and under its cover the Foxes stole away from their fort. Before they had gone far the crying of their children betrayed them. But the French did not dare to attack them amidst a darkness so dense that it was impossible to distinguish friend from foe. In the morning, however, they set out in hot pursuit.”

The pursuit became a mere massacre (the Foxes being then without ammunition), from which only fifty or sixty of the Foxes escaped. Many of the prisoners were burned at the stake. De Villiers sent his son Coulon as a special messenger to Quebec with the news, in earnest of which the latter

took with him a wretched Fox prisoner. The governor in his report to Paris says: "Tranquility, for so many years disturbed in the Upper Country, will now reign;" and closes with the cheering news: "Behold a nation humiliated in such a fashion that they will nevermore trouble the earth."

In truth "the offending tribe must now, one would think, have ceased to be dangerous," but nothing less than its total destruction would content the French. The latter, however, themselves never afterwards sent an expedition against the Foxes, but turned their punishment over to their Indian allies whom their officers led in repeated raids upon their unfortunate victims. But even this ceaseless vengeance failed to annihilate these splendid savages, the remnants of whom found a refuge with the Sauks; and when, a year later, De Villiers, then on Green Bay, went to a Sauk village and demanded the delivery to him of certain Foxes secreted there, he was fiercely attacked and both himself and his younger son killed—the latter by the sure aim of a Sauk boy of twelve, who thus restored order to a defense by his people that had become but a panic. In the fight the French lost heavily; but the result of the affair was to send the Sauks and Foxes across the Mississippi into Iowa, among whose tribes they recuperated their strength and became again a "thorn in the flesh"

of the French for many years, and a menace later even to the American frontier in 1832, when under Black Hawk, the Sauks and Foxes rose in open war against the United States. Then they were finally subdued for all time. Their descendants still occupy lands in Iowa.

Though they met the fate of all their race, nevertheless the Foxes unconsciously, as has been seen, played an important part in shaping the destiny of the continent; for it was no slight service to liberty as opposed to absolutism that they closed the gateways between Canada and Louisiana and for thirty years virtually kept them closed, thus preventing the consolidation of the extremes of New France; while in endeavoring to destroy the Foxes, the French but kindled a mightier conflagration which spread over all the West. "The splendid resistance of the Wisconsin savages and the revelation of the white man's weakness and wickedness had disenchanted the Indians. The prestige of France was gone."* One after another the western tribes became refractory and hostile,—the Sioux in 1736; and the Chickasaws in the South; even the Hurons and Ottawas in 1740 became uneasy and impudent. Discontent everywhere among the tribes became the rule, and as year after year followed the Canadian governor

* HEBBERD: "Wisconsin Under the Dominion of France."

could only report to Paris that "there is a great change of feeling among the Indians of the West and the state of affairs there is very bad." Only the Illinois continued faithful to their priests and to France.

This condition of western hostility continued up to the very opening of the French and Indian War, whose close saw the retirement of France from Canada and the West forever. So that these long and awful wars, as discreditable to French humanity as they were to Canadian military acumen, paved the way for the Anglo-Saxon conquest and occupation when the time was ripe for that happy event. Starved Rock as the spot where took place not the least important of those struggles between the French and their allies and their unconquerable savage foes, thus became a by no means insignificant part of the scenery of that greater contest of races and ideas which ultimately closed by giving "the rivers and prairies of the Great West to the English-speaking race" and by "handing the continent over to its rightful inheritors, the free-men of America."



LOOKING TO THE NORTHWEST FROM SUMMIT OF STARVED ROCK.

THE LAST OF THE ILLINOIS.

Under the hollow sky,
Stretched on the prairie lone,
Center of glory, I,
Bleeding, disdain to groan,
But like a battle-cry
Peal forth my thunder moan.
Baim—wah—wah!

.

Hark to those spirit notes!
Ye high heroes divine,
Hymned from your god-like throats
That song of praise is mine!
Mine, whose grave-pennon floats
O'er the foeman's line.
Baim—wah—wah!

—*Death Song.**

THE FINAL TRAGEDY.

It is believed that the tragedy which gave Starved Rock its suggestive name was a part of the aftermath of the wars of the conspiracy of Pontiac; yet as there are no known cotemporary accounts of this occurrence, our knowledge of which rests largely on tradition, Beckwith† insists there is really no authority at all to support it, other than the “vague, though charming, traditions drawn from the wonder stories of many tribes.” Yet no reader of this sketch will, I hope, be will-

* DEATH SONG: “A be tuh ge zhig.” Algonquin by Schoolcraft; English by C. F. Hoffman.

† BECKWITH (Hiram W.): “Illinois and Indiana Indians.”

ing, however meager Mr. Beckwith may have considered our authorities, to now surrender, at his dictum, so dramatic and picturesque a tale, hallowed as it is by the faith in its truth of our pioneer predecessors, who have woven the tale into the fabric of local historical tradition. There is nothing in the least improbable in the legend; rather, there is much to support the affirmations of Indian, French and American tradition, that the tragedy of the obliteration by starvation here of a race of dusky warriors did actually take place as residents of the Illinois Valley have been led to believe ever since the modern owners of the lands came upon them.

It is not proposed to dwell on the Conspiracy of Pontiac. The student of American history and the reader of romance alike will find the record in Parkman's volumes bearing that title: a broad historic projection for the student; history as charmingly told as romance for the general reader. Suffice it here to say, that a few days before his death, in 1769, Pontiac made his old friend, Pierre Chouteau, the trader, a visit at St. Louis; and while there heard of an Indian drinking bout or other festivities about to be held at Cahokia. Thither, in spite of the warnings of his host, Pontiac went, in April, 1769, and while drunk, was, at the instigation of an English trader named Williamson,

murdered for the bribe of a barrel of whiskey, by a Kaskaskia Indian.*

The murder set the whole Illinois country aflame. "The news spread like lightning through the country," says one account, quoted by Parkman. "The Indians assembled in great numbers, attacked and destroyed all the Peorias, except about thirty families, which were received into Fort Chartres." All the authorities agree that the murder "brought on successive wars, and the almost total extermination of the Illinois." Parkman's own text says: "Could Pontiac's shade have revisited the scene of his murder, his savage spirit would have exulted in the vengeance which overwhelmed the abettors of the crime. Whole tribes were rooted out to expiate it. Chiefs and sachems, whose veins had thrilled with his eloquence; young warriors, whose aspiring hearts had caught the inspiration of his greatness, mustered to revenge his fate; and from the north and the east, their united bands descended on the villages of the Illinois. Tradition has but faintly preserved the memory of the event; and its only annalists, men who held the intestine feuds of the savage tribes in no more account than the quarrels of panthers or wildcats, have

* PARKMAN: "Conspiracy of Pontiac," Vol. II. In a note he says that Pontiac's body was claimed by St.-Ange, who buried it near his fort at St. Louis. A bronze tablet in the corridor of the Southern Hotel today indicates that that great hostelry has been erected over the grave of the famous chieftain.

left but a meager record. Yet enough remains to tell us that over the grave of Pontiac more blood was poured out in atonement than flowed from the veins of the slaughtered heroes on the corpse of Patroclus; and the remnant of the Illinois who survived the carnage remained forever after sunk in utter insignificance."

The specific incident with which the name of Starved Rock is indissolubly linked is nowhere mentioned in military reports of the time, for there was no contemporary white man's war in whose annals such an event might be recorded; nor are the Pottawatomie Indians alone to be charged with the horrors of the revenge wreaked by Pontiac's Indian friends. Nevertheless, the Pottawatomie Indians, who had by this time come into possession of most of the lands in Illinois formerly held by the several tribes who are named in a group as the Illinois, were on the ground at this time, and without doubt took their part in the general fighting.

The "wonder story" which Mr. Beckwith cites as the most interesting of those preserving this tradition is that published by the late Judge John Dean Caton, in a pamphlet entitled, "The Last of the Illinois and a Sketch of the Pottawatomies." Judge Caton was very early a resident of Illinois and of La Salle county and knew well the pioneers and the disappearing Indians by personal contact.

In his sketch he says that the wars against the Illinois had so reduced them in numbers that now, in their direst extremity, driven hither as a last refuge, "they found sufficient space upon the half acre of ground which covers the summit of Starved Rock. As its sides are perpendicular, ten men could repel ten thousand with the means of warfare then at their command. The allies made no attempt to take the fort on the Rock by storm, but closely besieged it on every side. On the north, or river, side the upper rock overhangs the water somewhat, and tradition tells us how the confederates placed themselves in canoes under the shelving rock and cut the thongs of the besieged when they lowered their vessels to obtain water from the river, and so reduced them by thirst; but Meachelle,* as far as I know, never mentioned this as one of the means resorted to by the confederates to reduce their enemies, nor, from an examination of the ground, do I think this probable; but they depended upon a lack of provisions, which we can readily appreciate must soon occur to a savage people who rarely anticipate the future in storing up supplies. How long the besieged held out Meachelle did not, and probably could not, tell us; but at last the time came when the unfortunate rem-

* Meachelle was a Pottawatomie chief who told the story to Judge Caton, the chief being a boy at the time of the siege.

nant could hold out no longer. They awaited but a favorable opportunity to attempt their escape. This was at last afforded by a dark and stormy night, when, led by their few remaining warriors, all stole in profound silence down the steep and narrow declivity to be met by a solid wall of their enemies surrounding the point where alone a sortie could be made, and which had been confidently expected. The horrid scene that ensued can be better imagined than described. No quarter was asked or given. For a time the howlings of the tempest were drowned by the yells of the combatants and the shrieks of the victims.

“Desperation lends strength to even enfeebled arms, but no efforts of valor could resist the overwhelming numbers actuated by the direst hate. The braves fell one by one, fighting like very fiends, and terribly did they revenge themselves upon their enemies. The few women and children whom famine had left but enfeebled skeletons fell easy victims to the warclubs of the terrible savages, who deemed it as much a duty, and almost as great a glory, to slaughter the emaciated women and the helpless children as to strike down the men who were able to make resistance with arms in their hands. They were bent upon the utter extermination of their hated enemies, and most successfully did they bend their savage energies to the bloody task.

“Soon the victims were stretched upon the sloping ground south and west of the impregnable Rock, their bodies lying stark upon the sand which had been thrown up by the prairie winds. The wails of the feeble and the strong had ceased to fret the night wind, whose mournful sighs through the neighboring pines sounded like a requiem. Here was enacted the fitting finale to that work of death which had been commenced, scarcely a mile away, a century before by the still more savage and terrible Iroquois.

“Still, all were not destroyed. Eleven of the most athletic warriors, in the darkness and confusion of the fight, broke through the besieging lines. They had marked well from their high perch on the isolated Rock the little nook below where their enemies had moored at least a part of their canoes, and to these they rushed with headlong speed, unnoticed by their foes. Into these they threw themselves, and hurried down the rapids below. They had been trained to the use of the paddle and the canoe, and knew well every intricacy of the channel, so that they could safely thread it, even in the dark and boisterous night. They knew their deadly enemies would soon be in their wake, and that there was no safe refuge for them short of St. Louis. They had no provisions to sustain their waning strength, and yet it was certain death

to stop by the way. Their only hope was in pressing forward by night and by day, without a moment's pause, scarcely looking back, yet ever fearing that their pursuers would make their appearance around the point they had last left behind. It was truly a race for life. If they could reach St. Louis, they were safe; if overtaken, there was no hope. We must leave to the imagination the details of a race where the stake was so momentous to the contestants. As life is sweeter even than revenge, we may safely assume that the pursued were impelled to even greater exertions than the pursuers. Those who ran for life won the race. They reached St. Louis before their enemies came in sight, and told their appalling tale to the commandant of the fort, from whom they received assurances of protection, and were generously supplied with food, which their famished condition so much required. This had barely been done when their enemies arrived and fiercely demanded their victims, that no drop of blood of their hated enemies might longer circulate in human veins. This was refused, when they retired with impotent threats of future vengeance which they never had the means of executing.

“After their enemies had gone, the Illinois, who never after even claimed that name, thanked their entertainers, and, full of sorrow which no words

can express, slowly paddled their way across the river, to seek new friends among the tribes who then occupied the southern part of this State, and who would listen with sympathy to the sad tale they had to relate. They alone remained the broken remnant and last representatives of their once great nation. Their name, even now, must be blotted out from among the names of the aboriginal tribes. Henceforth they must cease to be of the present, and could only be remembered as a part of the past. This is the last we know of the 'last of the Illinois.' They were once a great and prosperous people, as advanced and as humane as any of the aborigines around them; we do not know that a drop of their blood now animates a human being, but their name is perpetuated in this great State, of whose record of the past all of us feel so proud, and of whose future the hopes of us all are so sanguine.

"Till the morning light revealed that the canoes were gone the confederates believed that their sanguinary work had been so thoroughly done that not a living soul remained. So soon as the escape was discovered, the pursuit was commenced, but as we have seen, without success. The pursuers returned disappointed and dejected that their enemies' scalps were not hanging from their belts. But surely blood enough had been spilled—

vengeance should have been more than satisfied.

“I have failed, no doubt, to properly render Meachelle’s account of this sad drama, for I have been obliged to use my own language, without the inspiration awakened in him by the memory of the scene which served as his first baptism in blood. Who can wonder that it made a lasting impression on his youthful mind? Still, he was not fond of relating it, nor would he speak of it except to those who had acquired his confidence and intimacy. It is probably the only account to be had related by an eye-witness, and we may presume that it is the most authentic.”

While the writer must confess that the learned jurist’s version of the Starved Rock tradition is open to the criticism that some of its details are improbable, nevertheless of the substantial truth of the legend, we believe there can be but little doubt. Even man’s wonder stories have always something of fact, of human experience, or of physical phenomena, behind them, as one might reply to Mr. Beckwith’s skepticism. But the story of Starved Rock, as told by Judge Caton, has been corroborated by other competent searchers for the truth, especially by the late Hon. Perry A. Armstrong, of Morris, another of the pioneers of La Salle county, Illinois, who knew personally many of the famous Indians of this part of the State, who

died subsequently to the coming of the permanent American settlers. Among these was an old chief named Shick Shack, claiming to be 104 years of age, who, as Mr. Armstrong said, in an address* at a celebration at Starved Rock of the two-hundredth anniversary (September 10, 1873) of its discovery, told him substantially the same story that Meachelle told Judge Caton, which the latter published in 1876. Shick Shack said he was present at the siege, a boy half grown.

The late N. Matson,† of Princeton, was another student of this legend. In prosecuting his researches, he spent much time (prior to 1882) with the descendants of French colonists who had lived at Kaskaskia and Cahokia in the eighteenth century. Mr. Matson was more than convinced of the truth of the legend, so called. Indeed, he goes so far as to identify "the only survivor of the fearful tragedy." This warrior, Mr. Matson tells us, was a young man, "partly white, being a descendant on his father's side from the French. Being alone in the world after the catastrophe, he went to Peoria, joined the colony, and there ended his days. He embraced Christianity, and became an officer in the church, assuming the name of Antonio La Bell; and his descendants are now (1882)

* Ottawa Free Trader, September, 1873.

† MATSON: "Pioneers of Illinois," 1882.

living near Prairie du Rocher, one of whom, Charles La Bell, was a party to a suit in the United States court to recover the land on which the city of Peoria now stands.”

Mr. Matson further states that Col. Jos. N. Bourassa, a descendant of the Illinois French, living (1882) in Kansas, had collected a large number of stories relating to the Starved Rock tragedy; and himself had heard two aged warriors, who participated in the massacre, narrate many incidents which took place at that time. Another old Indian named Mashaw, once well known by early Ottawa and Hennepin traders, Mr. Matson says, also made various statements, through an interpreter, in relation to the tragedy, to early American traders and settlers. Mashaw said that seven Indians escaped from the Rock. Medore Jennette, an employe of the Chouteaus, the famous fur traders at St. Louis, who lived many years at the Pottawatomie village at the mouth of Fox River [Ottawa], has left many traditions of this tragedy to his descendants, according to Mr. Matson. Jennette came to the country in 1772 and says he himself saw the bones of the dead Illinois upon the Rock. An Indian named Shaddy (or Shaty) was still another who gave Mr. Matson details of this story, which he had from his father, who was present. Shaddy (Shaty) said only one man, the

half-breed La Bell, escaped. Two traders, Robert Maillet and Felix La Pance, are said to have left the record that, returning from Canada with goods, they saw the buzzards on Starved Rock cleaning the bones of the dead. Further, Mr. Matson adds that Father Buche, a priest at Peoria, traveling up Illinois River the following spring (1770), ascended the Rock and there saw the horrid evidences of the tragedy, the holy Father's written story of this visit being in manuscript (dated April, 1770) which, in 1882, was in the hands of one Hypolite Pilette, then living on the American Bottom.

Not to go further, it may be said in conclusion that there is nothing improbable in the Starved Rock legend. In this narrative we have seen the Rock at least once used as a refuge and its occupants subjected to siege, although it did not come to so dire a consummation as the siege we are considering; but the murderous character of this denouement is entirely consistent with Indian habit and practice. Speaking of the remorseless massacre of several hundred Foxes (Outagamies) at Detroit, 1712, by French and Indians, Parkman* says: "There is a disposition to assume that events like that just recounted were a consequence of the contact of white men with red, but the primi-

* PARKMAN: "Half Century of Conflict."

tive Indian was quite able to enact such tragedies without the aid of Europeans. Before French or English influence had been felt in the interior of the continent, a great part of North America was the frequent witness of scenes more lurid in coloring and on a larger scale of horror. In the first half of the seventeenth century the whole country, from Lake Superior to the Tennessee and from the Alleghenies to the Mississippi, was ravaged by wars of extermination, in which tribes, large and powerful, by Indian standards, perished, dwindled into feeble remnants or were absorbed by other tribes and vanished from sight." Extermination of the red man by red men's and white men's hands alike was the fate of the Indian; and the Starved Rock tragedy was but an incident of the resistless and remorseless movement of Indian destiny.

THE AFTERMATH.

Far as we are informed, so thick and fast they fell,
Scarce twenty of their number at night did get home well.
—*Puritan Ballad.*

THE POTTAWATOMIES.

The Hon. P. A. Armstrong, of Morris, Ill., who has written much upon the Indian wars of Illinois in the last century, in 1873 published in the *Morris Reformer* a series of articles on the Starved Rock tradition, based upon personal interviews had sixty years ago with early pioneers of La Salle and Grundy counties, as well as the retiring red men, trappers, traders and other frontiersmen. After sketching the war which ended with the Rock tragedy, Mr. Armstrong brings the conquering tribes together the following spring on Indian Creek, in La Salle county, north and east of Ottawa, where they met to have a jollification over their victory, and then proceeds substantially as follows:

“On this occasion weeks were spent in feasting, dancing and merrymaking,—weeks fraught with the most direful consequences to the peace and harmony of the allies; for at this feast each and every warrior was allowed and expected to recite in the



A RAVINE NEAR STARVED ROCK, CALLED FRENCH CANYON.

most exaggerated manner his prowess as a warrior; the scalps he had taken, the dangers encountered and sufferings endured, commencing in all instances with 'Big Indian me.' Jealousies at once sprung up as each candidate applied for applause, the squaws and papposes naturally siding with the warriors of their respective tribes; and a feeling of distrust, if not hate, was soon engendered, which daily increased, so that when the chiefs came to talk about the division of the territory they had acquired, each tribe claimed the lion's share. They all desired that territory watered by the Illinois River and its tributaries. An amicable division or adjustment could not be made. The Miamis were by far more numerous than either of the other tribes, and moreover were much better armed, since they had quite a number of muskets while the other tribes had none. This rendered the Miamis very domineering and haughty. They demanded all or nearly all of the newly acquired territory, which, of course, the other two tribes resisted; hence an open rupture was made, and a battle ensued upon the very grounds they had used in feasting, the Pottawatomies and Kickapoos uniting their forces against the Miamis. Many were slain on both sides; and after fighting from morning until night, the Miamis took advantage of the night to withdraw, leaving the allies in possession of the

battle field. But this battle, although a severe one, was by no means a decisive one. The losses on both sides were heavy, and neither were in a condition to renew the fight for several months, as they were out of provisions and short of clothing and implements of war.

“The rest of the summer and following winter was spent in preparing for a renewal of the contest the following spring. The Miamis went down the river and thence to Kaskaskia, while the Pottawatomies and Kickapoos remained near their previous winter quarters, collecting provisions and clothing and constructing bows and arrows and other implements of Indian warfare. Early in the spring following (1771), the Miamis returned northward to give battle to their late allies, but now bitter enemies, and were met near Peoria, where another battle was fought, which, like the former one, was not decisive—was, indeed, a drawn battle; and each party buried their own dead.

“The war lasted, with indifferent success to either party, for about five years, and many a hard fought battle attested the bravery of these unfortunate, passion-blinded savages, who left their dead buried in many places throughout the coveted territory. In the year 1775 they had worked around and nearly back to the place where their first battle had occurred with the Illinois. Harassed and worn

by repeated and sanguinary battles, both sides were well nigh exhausted.

“A proposition was then made on the part of the Miamis to pick three hundred warriors from each side and let them commence to fight at sunrise and continue the fight until either the one side or the other should conquer. This proposition was at once accepted by the Pottawatomies and Kickapoos, upon the condition that the weapons on both sides should be the bow and arrow, tomahawk, knife and spear, or such implements of warfare as were peculiarly Indian, and that the remnant of each army should cross to the east side of the Wabash River, so that no assistance or interference could possibly be made by either side. This agreement was entered into with all the solemnity of the high councils of these respective tribes, and three hundred picked warriors were selected from each side, who crossed over to the bloody ground and encamped upon Sugar Creek, which empties into the Wabash River. The place selected for this terrible duel was a heavy timber about twenty miles from the Wabash. The battle was to commence at sunrise the following morning.

“The fated morning came—a calm, cool, bright September morn, and with the coming of the morning sun the battle commenced. Six hundred stalwart warriors engaging in a strife for victory or

death. Here were the deeds of a Thermopylæ re-enacted. Quarter was neither asked nor given—'death was the watchword and reply.' Now shielding behind some giant oak—every ruse was resorted to in the hope of inducing the enemy to expose his person—now grappling in a death struggle, the combatants fell never to rise again.

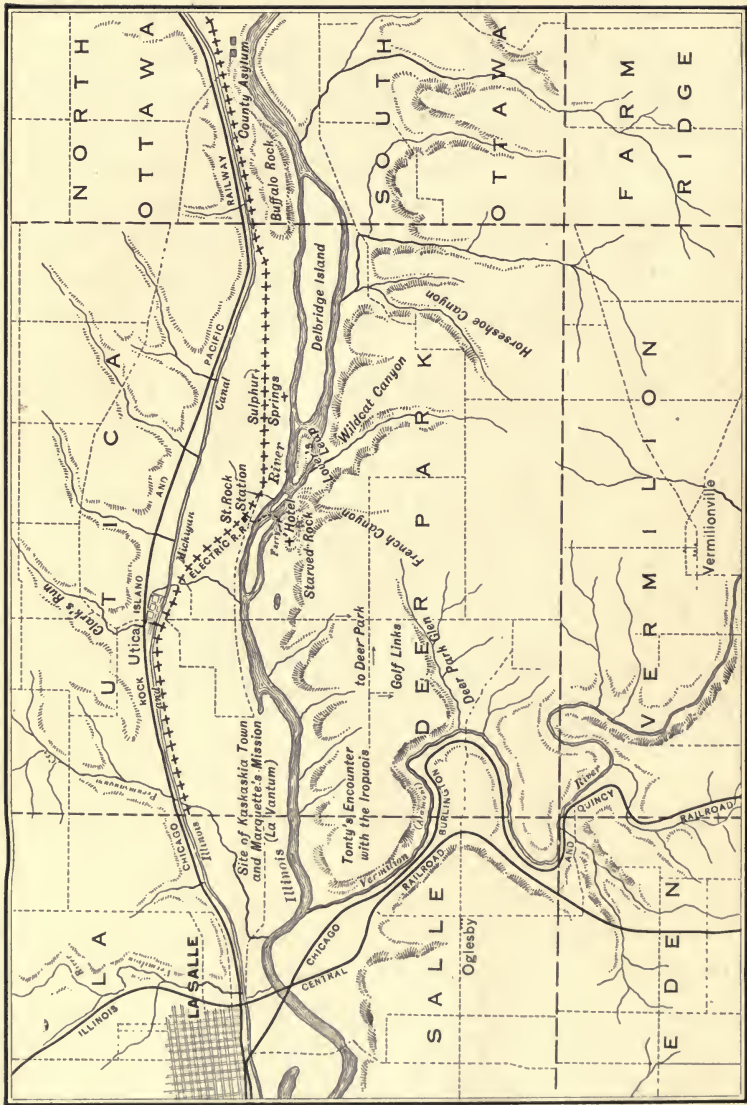
“This duel raged from sunrise to sunset, when twelve warriors only remained—five Miamis and seven Pottawatomies and Kickapoos. The five run, the seven are the victors. The great chiefs, Shick Shack, Sugar, Marquett and Shaty were among the seven. The Miamis were conquered; and by their agreement gave up all claim to the hunting ground of the annihilated Illinois and retired east of the Wabash.

“Thus did the Pottawatomies and Kickapoos become the successors of the Illinois, and soon after this final battle with the Miamis they divided the territory between themselves, the Kickapoos taking all the territory adjoining the Wabash west to a line running north and south through Oliver's Grove in Livingston county, and the Pottawatomies all the territory west of that line.”

The Pottawatomies, having taken undisputed possession of their conquest, made their principal village on the plain northwest of Starved Rock, near the present village of Utica, where, among

others, the youthful G. S. Hubbard, later one of the founders of the city of Chicago, as representative of the American Fur Company, carried on a trade with them. Here, unlike the vanished Illinois, the Pottawatomies lived in tents, not in cabins. Another important village was called Wau-bunsee (or Wauponchsee), located at the mouth of the Fox River of Illinois, where is now the city of Ottawa.

In 1814, a treaty was made with the Ottawas, Chippewas and Pottawatomies, kindred tribes, by Ninian Edwards, William Clark and Auguste Chouteau, by which the Indians gave up their Illinois lands south of a line running west from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi. A few years later (1834) the Pottawatomies were removed from Illinois to new lands beyond the Mississippi; and the Indian's part in the history of Starved Rock came to an end forever.



MAP OF MODERN STARVED ROCK'S ENVIRONS.

MODERN STARVED ROCK.

Methinks you take luxurious pleasure
In your novel western leisure.

—*Thoreau.*

THE ERA OF THE WHITE MAN.

“Then the white man came, pale as the dawn, with a load of thought, with slumbering intelligence as a fire raked up. He bought the Indian’s moccasins and furs; then he bought his hunting grounds; and at length he forgot where the Indian was buried and plowed up his bones.” It is the same here as everywhere; each locality plays its variation of the theme which but now is dying away in the west, as the wild Indian slowly disappears off the face of the earth; and from a feudal castle of *Sieur de la Salle* and a *Rock of refuge* for hunted savages, *Starved Rock* has passed into its “western leisure.”

Always a landmark of the great West in the most romantic epochs of its history, it still was such when the English settlers began to invade the Illinois country; and it would be difficult to find a traveler journeying through the Illinois Valley, “spying out the land,” who did not turn aside to visit and in his letters call attention to this remarkable natural curiosity.

Flint in his "History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley," published in 1833, devotes a page to "Rock Fort," describing the beauty of the Rock itself and its surroundings and repeating the tradition that has given it its name, though he nowhere calls it other than "Rock Fort." The Rock, he says, "has on its top a level surface of three-fourths of an acre in extent, and is covered by soil several feet in depth, which has thrown up a growth of young trees. These form, as they receive their peculiar tints from the seasons, a verdant or gorgeous and particolored crown for this battlement of nature's creation." He describes the natural beauty and defenses of the Rock and adds that the Illinois could have escaped destruction if they could have gotten water; so that he appears to have believed the truth of the story of the disastrous siege, even if he nowhere gives the Rock its modern name.

Charles Fenno Hoffman, a then more or less distinguished New York *litterateur*, who visited the Rock in January, 1834, while on a winter tour through the West, on the other hand, calls the place "Starved Rock" and nothing else, showing that such was its common name at that time in the Illinois country. Hoffman has a note, written by an unidentified friend resident in Illinois, which repeats the familiar legend, with this single ex-

ception, that while the writer says one person escaped from the Rock, that person was a squaw, who was still alive when the Englishmen entered the country.

Schoolcraft (1820), in his "Travels through the Central Portions of the Mississippi Valley," records having visited the Rock, when he made the sketch from which the engraving used at the end of this chapter has been made. "Strong and almost inaccessible by nature," he says, "this natural battlement has been still further fortified by the Indians; and many years ago was the scene of a desperate conflict between the Pottawatomies and one branch of the Illinois Indians." He then proceeds to tell how the Illinois fled to the Rock; how they got water by letting down vessels attached to ropes; how their enemies prevented their getting water by cutting away the vessels. "The consequence was a surrender which was followed by a total extinction of the tribe." He erroneously credits the story to Charlevoix (1682-1761). The Illinois River seen from the Rock he calls "a view of this modern Oxus."

Schoolcraft found the site of a Pottawatomic [Miami?] village on Buffalo Rock and another village site on the plain below that plateau, protected by a ditch and wall. Here, "our trusty [Indian] guide 'Peerish' informed us, was the

last stand of the Kaskaskias before they retreated to the Rock Fort."

Of all the many articles that were written of Starved Rock in the first half of the nineteenth century, however, none, perhaps, came to have a wider circulation, or gave the Rock wider celebrity, than one written by Charles Lanman, which was republished as an "elegant extract in prose from an eloquent writer" in the famous "Sanders Series" of readers "for the use of academies and the higher classes in common and select schools." It was read and declaimed by Illinois youth of several decades; and I have no doubt that the article so published has been the means of bringing thousands of curious visitors to the Rock in the past fifty years.

The era of the "plowshare and pruning hook" has come to Starved Rock; but the frightful and laborious past, soothed and softened by the tempering touch of lapsing time, has left its record which now is like the

Legends and runes

Of credulous days; old fancies that have lain
 Silent from boyhood, taking voice again,
 Warmed into life once more, even as tunes
 That, frozen in the fabled hunting horn,
 Thawed into sound.

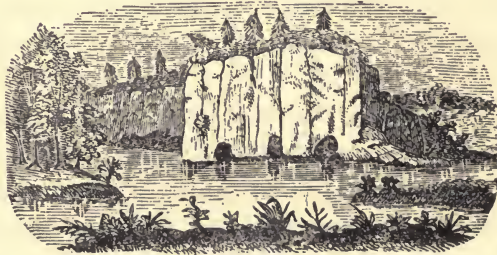
The modern Starved Rock beleaguers come arrayed in outing suits and picnic habiliments; and

where once the Frenchmen braved the terrors of savagery, his nineteenth century successors, born of all nations, now invade the land to make *al fresco* holiday.

Near by, and accessible to pleasure seekers, are the glens and ravines, locally called canyons, of Illinois River, which unite to make this the most interesting locality from a scenic point of view on the entire stream. Farther away, but still within even walking distance—a few miles—is the famous Deer Park Glen, the beauty spot of the Big Vermilion River which itself is for many miles of its length the most interesting region, from the geologist's and artist's point of view, in all northern Illinois.

In short, Starved Rock has become a very popular summer resort of the Illinois Valley, visited by thousands of people annually from all parts of the Union. And now that the state of Illinois has provided by law for a park commission and provided the money to buy the Rock and many contiguous acres for a state park and forest reserve, the great historic site will be preserved from the destructive attrition of pure commercialism that was ruining its physical beauty, and the Rock will forever stand as a monument to the indomitable La Salle and his noble, generous and unselfish friend Tonty, to the martyred Ribourde and those

other "apostles to the gentiles," as well as to those weak ones of earth, whose mortal sufferings here were, in God's mysterious wisdom, not the least of the many contributions of human sacrifice and suffering which have preserved to the people of the Illinois Valley, and of the United States, and of the world, the priceless heritage of English Liberty.



STARVED ROCK.

(Reproduced, greatly reduced in size, from Schoolcraft's "Travels," etc. It is the first picture ever made of the Rock, so far as is known.)

RELICS.

Some rusted swords appear in dust;
One, bending forward, says,
"The arms belonged to heroes gone;
We never hear their praise in song."
—*Duan of Ca-Lodin.*

AN ANCIENT DEED.

[*Translation.*]

“The year 1693, the 19th of April, I, Francis de la Forest, Captain on the retired list in the marine service, Seigneur of part of all the country of Louisiana, otherwise Illinois, granted to Monsieur de Tonty and to me by the King to enjoy in perpetuity, we, our heirs, successors, and assigns, the same as it was recognized by the act of the Sovereign Council in Quebec in the month of August, of the year 1691, the said council assembled, declare in the presence of the undersigned witness that I have ceded, sold, and transferred to M. Michel Acau* the half of my part of the above described concession, to enjoy the same like myself from the present time, to him, his heirs, successors, and assigns, with the same rights, privileges, prerogatives and benefits which have been heretofore accorded to the late M. de la Salle as it ap-

* See Chapter on “The Missions,” *supra*.

Les mil. six cent quatre vingt six de dix-neuf; j'aurai
 Les Français de la Compagnie Capitaine Reforme Jean Le Goupe
 de la marine s'agissant en partie de tout le pays de la
 Louisiane au front et j'aurai donne à monsieur de tony
 et moy par le Roy pour en jouir à perpétuité nous
 avec trois successeurs coyant Caulet et j'icy j'ind à este Reconne
 Par Lettre du Consul Souverain de Quebec au mois d'août
 De l'année 1674 Le dict Conseil assemble de Chere en
 Presence des bourgeois sous signes à vis s'eda vendant
 et transporté en s'v à l'au la moitié de mesport
 De la sus dicte Concession pour en jouir Comme moy
 des à present Les sus dits successeurs c'oyant Caulet
 à eux Les mesmes droit privilege prerogative et
 Immunités qu'il à este cy devant accordé à son
 Monsieur De La Roche Ce qui est porte précisément
 Dans La Rest du Conseil du Roy et se moynant
 La somme de six mille Livres En l'estor Comptant
 qui Le dict s'v a été medonné à l'edification
 de mesmes Contant Une fois payé sans que
 Je puisse Rien pretendre de Luy d'auantage
 ny pour le pay du dict Costor Emorcel ny pour
 Les Regal et Comme Luy à point j'ay d'auantage
 Sous Luy en passer une Vante Emoulliee à
 La Troisième occasion de Luy en renvoyer une
 Comme au l'ymie Copie Colationnee par deuant
 notaire de la sus dicte Rest du Conseil du Roy
 Furent La presente Concession en fois de j'icy
 nous à nous l'equa La dite vante Lun et L'autre
 Ce jour et à h que dessus et en cas que Lun de nous
 Deux Voult de faire de se plus le Luy qui satis
 Restora en sera Le premier preleve de fin sera
 Responne entre monsieur de tony et moy
 De la presnt fut double Ce jour et au que dessus.

M. ACO *Madame de la Roche* Nicolas Lauson
Formos de La Roche ville de min

FACSIMILE OF THE FIRST DEED EXECUTED IN ILLINOIS.

pears particularly in the decree of the Council of the King; and in consideration of the sum of 6,000 livres in current beaver which the said M. Acau shall pay me at Chicagou, where I stay, and upon the making of the payment down I cannot demand from him any advantage neither for the carriage of the said beaver to Montreal nor for the risk, and as there is no notary here for him to pass an instrument of sale I bind myself at the first occasion to send him one, as also a copy compared before a notary of the above mentioned decree of the Council of the King touching the present concession, on faith of which we have both signed the said contract of sale the one and the other the day and the year as above; and in case that one of us two would dispose of his part the remaining one shall be the first preferred, and this is mutual between M. de Tonty and me. Made in duplicate the day and year aforesaid.

“DE LA FOREST.

“M. ACO.

“DE LA DESCOUVERTES, Witness.

“NICHOLAS LAURENS, DE LA CHAPELLE, Witness.”

The deed is indorsed on the back to the following effect: “Bill of sale between Mr. Aco and me conveying the land of the Illinois.”

This deed was purchased in Paris, late in year 1893, by Hon. Edward G. Mason and deposited by

him in the archives of the Historical Society of Chicago, January 16, 1894. It is believed to be the first conveyance of Illinois real estate,—though its metes and bounds are not very clear, except that it was the Illinois country,—made by deed executed within the borders of the State; but the deed was also a conveyance of a trading concession as of lands. The document covers one page of large foolscap paper and is apparently all in the handwriting of La Forest.* The paper bears an ancient watermark and is of the same texture and quality as that used in Canada at the time of its date.

In presenting the document to the Society, Mr. Mason epitomized the facts given in this little book, concluding as follows:

“The grantee in the deed, whose name is usually written Michel Accau, was the real leader of the party which, by La Salle’s direction, explored the upper Mississippi and discovered the Falls of St. Anthony in 1682. Father Hennepin accompanied this expedition as a volunteer, and [having written an account of his travels on that occasion] is usually given the credit of its discoveries. Accau subsequently resided in Kaskaskia [town near Starved Rock] and married a daughter of the chief of the

* After La Forest’s trading concession was revoked in 1702, he became Cadillac’s lieutenant at Detroit and in 1710 was appointed commander of that post, which position he held until 1714. He died at Boucherville in 1719.—THWAITES: “La Hontan’s Voyages.”

Kaskaskia tribe. A record of their marriage still exists in the ancient register of the [new] parish of the Immaculate Conception at Kaskaskia [on the Mississippi].

“Of the witnesses, De La Descouverte was a Canadian voyageur from Lachine, who accompanied La Salle to the mouth of the Mississippi in 1682; La Chapelle was also one of La Salle’s men, who was with him in the year 1680, and was sent by him from the St. Joseph River and the Michillimackinac in search of La Salle’s lost vessel, the Griffin, and afterwards joined Tonty at Fort Crevecoeur, near the present site of Peoria.

“It is quite certain that this document was executed either at Fort St. Louis of the Illinois or at Chicago, with the probability in favor in the latter place [as La Forest was stationed there while he and Tonty divided the concession]. In 1693 there had been already, certainly for eight [or ten?] years, a fort here, and there was near it at that time a Jesuit mission; and doubtless here occurred the first conveyance of real estate in what is now Illinois executed within its boundaries, which this ancient document evidences. It is fitting and fortunate that it should, two hundred years after its execution, come into possession of the Historical Society of Chicago to be preserved sacredly by it.”

Another interesting relic of Starved Rock's ancient days is a cross, of which below is a picture made from a photograph (full size of original).



A RARE CROSS.

It was found near the Rock, and was the property of the late Col. D. F. Hitt. To whom it belonged is of course unknown. It is made of brass and may

have belonged to any of the soldiers or voyageurs or even Indians who made the Rock their home or stopping place. The cross looks much like one of the rare "Lorraine crosses," still found at intervals in Wisconsin. A similar cross, found some years ago by a Temagaming Indian, returning from his winter's trapping, under a growth of moss, as he was clearing the ground for his tent, was declared by the highest antiquarian authority in Canada—Father Jones, of the Jesuit College in Montreal—to be one of a lot of sacred trinkets sent out by a certain Countess of Lorraine, to be distributed to the Huron and other Indians, as a reward for espousing the cause of the French as against the English. He fixed the date of its presentation as certainly earlier than 1649, because in the spring of that year the Huron tribe was practically exterminated by the more warlike and crafty Iroquois. The Jesuits then withdrew their mission, and no more of these Lorraine crosses were distributed in Canada, though they are frequently found in Wisconsin and other regions that later came into the field of the Jesuit missions. In the possession of the Chicago Historical Society is a similar but larger cross of silver, found near the site of La Salle's fort on Peoria Lake. Being of silver it was doubtless a gift to a chief.

THE ROCK IN LITERATURE.

The Rock has been the subject of numerous legendary tales and poems other than those mentioned in the text, a few of which may be mentioned here, to wit:

“Legend of Starved Rock,” by Mary W. Janvein; first published in “Peterson’s Magazine,” December, 1856.

“O-na-we-quah; or, A Legend of Starved Rock,” by Wm. Rounseville; first published in the “Western Magazine,” 185-.

“Ulah: An Indian Legend Verified,” a narrative poem; in “Ulah and Other Poems,” by Amanda T. Jones, Buffalo: H. H. Otis & Breed, Butler & Co., 1861.

These stories are purely fanciful and bear no resemblance to any “legend” of the Rock in common currency.

The most noteworthy story having Starved Rock for its scene is “The Story of Tonty,” by the late Mrs. Catherwood, a very charming historical novellette. Other recent novels utilize Starved Rock to a lesser degree, but it is hardly worth while to catalogue them here.

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